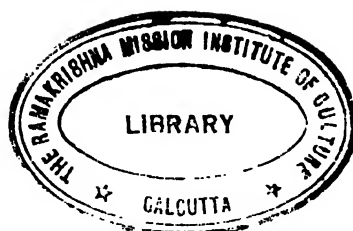


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Prabuddha Bharata

OR

AWAKENED INDIA

Vol. XLVI

JANUARY—DECEMBER, 1941



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्विबोधत

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached

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PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XLVI

JANUARY, 1941

No. 1



“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

EVENING-TIME; THE MASTER IN PRAYER

It is dusk. A light has been put in the room. Sri Ramakrishna is absorbed in repeating the names of deities. He sings and prays.

He keeps on repeating, ‘Haribol, Haribol, Haribol,’ and again, ‘Rama Rama, Rama,’ and then prays to the Divine Mother, ‘O Mother, the ever-playful One, show me the way, Mother ! I have taken refuge in Thy feet.’

The Master notices that Girish is in a hurry and keeps silent for a while. He then asks Tejachandra to come closer to him. Tejachandra comes and sits near the Master. After a time Tejachandra says in a whisper to M., ‘I shall have to return home now.’

Sri Ramakrishna (to M.): ‘What does he say?’

M.: ‘He says that it is time for him now to go home.’

Sri Ramakrishna : ‘Do you know why I draw them so much towards me? They are pure in heart and worldly

thoughts have not yet polluted their mind. One with a worldly mind can never comprehend higher things. Milk can safely be kept in a new vessel, but it gets spoiled if placed in a vessel that has been made use of for preparing curds.

‘A cup in which garlic has been pounded can hardly be rid of that smell, however much you may wash it.’

SRI RAMAKRISHNA IN THE STAR THEATRE;
NARENDRA AND OTHER DEVOTEES WITH
HIM

Sri Ramakrishna has come to the Star Theatre at Beadon Street to attend the play named Vrishaketu and is sitting in a box facing the south. M. and other devotees are seated near him.

Sri Ramakrishna (to M.): ‘Has Narendra come?’

M.: ‘Yes, revered sir.’

The play has begun. Karna and Padmavati take hold of a saw at either end and kill their son Vrishaketu. Bathed in tears Padmavati cooks the

flesh of her son. With great delight the aged Brahmin guest asks Karna, 'Come, let us partake of the meat together.' But Karna replies, 'Excuse me, please; I cannot take the flesh of my own son.'

A repressed cry of sympathy is heard from a devotee. The Master is moved with pity and gives expression to it.

After the play is over the Master comes to the green-room of the stage. Girish, Narendra and other devotees are sitting there. Sri Ramakrishna enters the room. He stands near Narendra and says, 'I have come.'

The Master has taken his seat. The music of the concert is still heard.

Sri Ramakrishna (to a devotee): 'I feel delighted to hear this music. The melody of the Sâñai (a kind of flute) used to throw me into ecstasies at Dakshineswar. At the sight of this a Sâdhu said that it was a sign of Brahma-Jñâna.'

The concert is over and the Master speaks again.

Sri Ramakrishna (to Girish): 'Does this Theatre belong to you alone or to you all?'

Girish: 'Yes, revered sir, it belongs to us.'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'While one speaks in the first person it is better for him to use the plural number instead of the singular. There are people who say, "I myself have come." But it only betrays a base and egoistic mind.'

Narendra: 'All the world is a stage.'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'Yes, it is so; it is a stage on which both Vidyâ and Avidyâ play their part at different places.'

Narendra: 'It is the play of Vidya that holds the scene everywhere.'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'Yes, but this can be realized only when Brahma-Jñana has been attained. To a devotee both Vidya Maya and Avidya Maya exist. Let us now hear a song from you.'

Narendra sings:

'Waves of love have risen on the sea of the Absolute, the embodiment of knowledge and bliss. . . .'

When Narendra sings the line, 'In the highest realization all things are melted into one,' Sri Ramakrishna remarks, 'This is realized in Brahma-Jñana. Everything in that state appears as a manifestation of Vidya as you said.'

Narendra closes the song by singing, 'In the madness of divine joy, O my mind, raise your hands and sing the name of Hari.' Sri Ramakrishna asks him to repeat the line twice.

After the singing is over the Master talks with the devotees again.

Girish: 'Devendra Babu has not come. He seems to have been offended. He says, "We have no substance in us, so what is the use of our going?"'

Sri Ramakrishna (with wonder): 'How is it? He was not so before!'

The Master drinks water and gives a portion of it to Narendra to drink.

Yatin Dev (to Sri Ramakrishna): 'You are always anxious to feed only Narendra as if we are none and are no better than undesirable intruders here!'

The Master loves Yatin very much. He pays frequent visits to Sri Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar and sometimes stays there at night. He belongs to the zemindar family of Shovabazar.

Sri Ramakrishna (to Narendra, with a smile): 'Look here, Yatin speaks in reference to you.'

The Master laughs. He touches the chin of Yatin in great endearment and says, 'Go to Dakshineswar, and there I shall feed you.'

Sri Ramakrishna attends another play named 'The Tragedy of the Marriage.' He resumes his seat in the box. The acting of the maid-servant delights him and he laughs.

The Master listens to the play for a while and then grows unmindful of it. He talks with M. in a low voice.

Sri Ramakrishna (to M.): 'Well, is what Girish Ghose says true? What do you say?' (Girish Ghose says that Sri Ramakrishna is an Avatara.)

M.: 'Yes, revered sir, he is right, otherwise why should it appeal to all?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'You see, a new mood has come upon me and the old condition has changed. I cannot now touch anything made of metal.'

M. listens with amazement.

Sri Ramakrishna: 'This new mood has a deep meaning behind it.'

The Master cannot touch any metal. Perhaps it is the sign of an Avatara that he practices complete renunciation of all the wealth and power that the world of Maya can confer. Does the Master hint at that?

Sri Ramakrishna (to M.): 'Well, do you notice any change in me?'

M.: 'Hardly any, revered sir.'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'Any change in my activities?'

M.: 'Your work is increasing as people are coming to know of you.'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'Just see, what I used to foretell is now coming to pass.'

The Master keeps silent for a while and then says all of a sudden, 'Well, how is it that Paltu cannot meditate well?'

THE LORD'S MESSAGE OF HOPE FOR THE SO-CALLED SINNERS

The Master now prepares to leave for Dakshineswar. Once he remarked about Girish to a devotee, 'He is like a cup that has been used for pounding garlic. However much you may wash the cup it will not give up the smell.' Girish, therefore, is in an offended mood. On the eve of the Master's departure Girish comes to him and asks, 'Will that smell of garlic go?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'Yes, it will go.'

Girish: 'You, then, guarantee that it will go; should I take it so?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'Smell and things like that take to their heels before such a blazing fire as that you have kindled. A cup used for keeping garlic may turn quite new if it is placed in fire.'

'A diffident man can hardly achieve anything. One who fervently believes that he is free, attains freedom, whereas one who always is inclined to think of himself in terms of bondage can never get rid of it. One who asserts with confidence that his is a liberated soul, liberated he becomes, while one who repeats day and night, "I am in bondage, I am in bondage", bound he remains.'

FROM DUALISM TO NON-DUALISM

BY SWAMI TURIYANANDA

Disease, bereavement, affliction, confinement, and disaster these are the fruits of the tree of man's own transgressions.' This is what the Shastras say. But if one can take refuge in God and defy these saying, 'Let the body and the pain take care of each other, but thou, O my mind, be happy,' one is saved from a lot of trouble.

For nothing is gained by wailing and beating one's breast except misery. Further it makes one forget the Supreme Goal to boot. It is only if one harbours the desire for enjoyment that one feels extremely miserable when the body is sick. Otherwise for devotional practices only a healthy mind is necessary, and not a very healthy body

so much. Spiritual practices are performed with the mind. Performance of pure works is enough to keep the mind in good spirits, whatever may be the state of the body. So one should pay special attention to purity of works. The body is daily moving towards destruction little by little; nobody will be able to stop that. But the mind is everlasting, that is to say, the bodies will come and go, but the mind will endure until full knowledge is attained and will be the cause of repeated incarnations. So the chief task is to try for the purification of the mind.

Dualism, non-dualism or whatever other isms there may be, all relate to the mind. The non-dualistic state is attained by the very realization of Selfhood, namely, the realization that 'I am the Self.' Dualism stays on so long as there are body and mind. No sooner one knows oneself to be the Self than dualism vanishes. Then there remains only one Intelligent Existence. It is to limitations only that all troubles are due. 'I am so and so, I am the son of so and so, such and such is my caste, these are my accomplishments,' etc. give rise to the dualistic consciousness. And where is there room for dualism if one can think, 'I am neither body, nor mind, nor intellect; I am the Self, pure and untouched by sin, and of the nature of Existence-Intelligence-Bliss?' But mere fine words will butter no parsnips; experience is necessary before it becomes a fact. The non-dualistic consciousness will emerge no sooner than one has the firm belief that he is the Self in the same way as he now firmly believes that he is so and so or that such and such is his name. Dualistic spiritual practices are only for inducing the non-dualistic consciousness. We are accustomed to the dualistic attitude. It has gradually to be purified more

and more by establishing a close relationship with God. Now the relation is with the world; this has to be broken off and replaced by the relationship with God. And if it is fully done, dualism will go of itself. There will remain only God, the Supreme Self; this little 'I' will vanish. This is attaining to the non-dualistic state through dualism by means of worship.

There is another way, namely, reaching the non-dualistic state by negating everything—by denying everything right now, saying, 'I am not the body, nor the mind, nor the intellect, I am the Self, Existence-Intelligence-Bliss. I am not destroyed by the destruction of the body. Happiness and misery are all characters of the mind, and do not belong to me. I am beyond the reach of speech and thought, the Indivisible Self, the One without a second.' If one can have this firm conviction, the non-dualistic consciousness is attained. But is it an easy thing? Is it realized by mere utterance? Not so. The Master used to say, 'It is no use to shut one's eyes and to repeat that there is neither the thorn nor its prick. No sooner one puts his hand than it is pricked. What will it avail to say, "I am the sky," when one cannot avoid being worried about paying taxes?' Therefore the immediate attainment of non-dualistic consciousness is not for all. For this reason, the Lord has said to Arjuna in the twelfth chapter of the Gita:—'For the goal of the Unmanifested is very hard for the embodied to reach' (Gita xii. 5). 'But those who worship Me, resigning all actions in Me, regarding Me as the Supreme Goal, meditating on Me with single-minded Yoga,—to these whose mind is set on Me, verily, I become ere long, O son of Pritha, the Saviour out of the ocean of the mortal Samsāra (Gita xii. 6, 7).

He Himself sets right everything—this is the help one gets if one can truly depend on Him. Is this also easy? Is this too possible for one and all without effort? Not that. This too is dependent on the mercy of God, or on the company of some holy person. Otherwise not. What is the use of mere declarations? One has to search and find out what are deep down in one's mind. And they have always to be dedicated to God after purification. Is this easy? He indeed is fortunate, who can develop such an attitude even after lifelong labours. It is no joke. It is extremely difficult to grasp and master any attitude, be it dualistic or non-dualistic. Bhagavan Shankara has made the following distinction between dualism and non-dualism:—

'Some worship Thee saying, "I am Thine," while others affirm, "I am Thee." There is this slight distinction, but both have the same result. One can take up whatever attitude appeals to him.'

But the attitude should be pure. It will not do 'to take the name of the Lord and at the same time tuck up one's clothes.' If the attitude be non-dualistic, body, mind, intellect and everything have to be denied. No sooner shall one say, 'I am the Self,' than all perception of happiness and misery should go from him. One will at once be the 'Self without part, without action, without blame and without blemish.' And if one says, 'I am His son or servant,' one has to resign oneself wholly to Him, firmly believing that whatever He does and in whatever situation He may choose to place him are all for his good. Both are very difficult and have to be practised. But both have the same result, viz.

cessation of the round of births and the attainment of Supreme Bliss. There is no doubt about this. Let each one take up whatever attitude appeals to him. But it should be whole-hearted. Without it neither will be fruitful.

The Lord has plainly set forth the fitness of different kinds of persons for different kinds of Yogas in the course of his instruction to Uddhava in the eleventh chapter of the Bhagavata.

'I have related the three Yogas, namely, Jnana, Karma, and Bhakti, wishing the good of mankind; there is no other way. Jnana-Yoga is for those who are without attachment and who have renounced action; Karma-Yoga is for those who are attached to work and who have desires, while Bhakti-Yoga is fruitful for those who are neither without attachment nor too much attached to objects and who have faith in my words.'

If you revolve this well within yourself you will easily settle it for yourself who are fit for the various kinds of Yogas. Persons who have turned away from objects are not very numerous, so also very few are those who are fit for Jnana-Yoga. Those who are too much attached to objects cannot avoid work. So it is likely that those who follow the middle way, that is to say, are neither wholly non-attached, nor too much attached and who have faith and devotion to God, will easily attain knowledge by following the path of devotion. Pursuit of this path of devotion is more easy and yields results quickly, and its practice begins in dualism. When it matures through the grace of the Lord, the non-dualistic consciousness comes of itself.

PERMANENT VALUES IN A CHANGING WORLD

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring happy bells, across the snow;
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

—Alfred Lord Tennyson : *In Memoriam*

We send our greetings to all our brothers and sisters in both the hemispheres. The ineffable peace that is reigning in this Himalayan retreat reminds us all the more of the din and strife of the war theatres of the West. Our heart-felt love goes to the women and children, who are suffering for no fault of theirs. Darker and more dreary days are ahead of us, but let us not lose hope. As we are writing these lines, we see in front of us a lofty Himalayan peak gloriously shining with new-fallen snow. It reminds us of the faith that sheds lustre on a pure human heart. Faith is no empty make-believe. It arises from the sincere conviction that there is a Heavenly Father, who listens

to our prayers, when we approach Him with humility and reverence. Our faith in God leads us to a belief in the innate goodness of humanity. Recently from his sick-bed Rabindranath Tagore, the world-poet, has, in the following words, reaffirmed his faith in the innate goodness of humanity. Says he, 'In the midst of this insane orgy of violence and destruction, I shall continue to hold fast to my faith in the final recovery of man's lost heritage of moral worth. Man is great. We who stand by him have the privilege of sharing defeat and disaster, but never the ignominy of betraying the great trust of humanity. I know that even in this demented

world, there are individuals scattered all over who believe with me.'

* * *

Man's moral worth is, indeed, a precious heritage. 'The nobler modes of life,' 'sweeter manners,' 'purer laws,' 'the love of truth and right,' 'the larger heart,' 'the kindlier hand,' and all other truly valuable things in life, which the great Victorian poet nobly pleads for, are of the very texture of man's moral worth. All these and many other noble qualities are denoted by the comprehensive Sanskrit term Dharma. The term has been rendered into English variously by various authors. 'The law,' 'the norm,' 'religion,' 'righteousness,' 'virtue,' and all other terms which have been actually used to render Dharma into English fail to convey the full significance of the Sanskrit term. The Indian thinkers with their wonderful capacity for finding unity in diversity have coined a term which has a very wide application. Generally speaking, Dharma denotes the standard of excellence that a particular object should attain with reference to the quality that characterizes it. Moral values elevate man above the brute creation, the Dharma of man, therefore, is the measure of the standard of excellence attainable by him in the realm of moral values. Again human Dharma in its more specialized aspect can be subdivided into many distinct 'norms' depending upon distinctions of caste, creed, occupation, sex and so on. There is a Dharma for the Brahmin, another for the Kshatriya, still another for the Vaishya and a fourth for the Shudra. There is a Dharma for the Sannyasin and another for the householder. There is the Dharma of the woman and the Dharma of the child. There is one Dharma for action and another for rest, one for war and another for peace. There is Bauddha Dharma, Jaina

Dharma and so on. The Dharma Shastras have elaborated all these and have framed codes of conduct for various groups and various occasions. Every person has to endeavour to attain excellence in his or her own line. As Swami Vivekananda has clearly shown in his Karma-Yoga, each is great in his or her own place. The Hindu religion is known as the Eternal Dharma, for rising above mere doctrines and dogmas, it leads its votaries through various steps to reach the highest and it also exhorts every one to endeavour to attain his or her fullest development.

* * *

There is a rhythm in Nature. Birth succeeds death until, of course, the individual soul gets released and goes to a place or state, where there is neither birth nor death. Infancy is succeeded by youth, then manhood comes and is followed by old age. Death is no unwelcome visitor, for it brings a period of rest, a short respite before the beginning of a new round of activities. Heart-beats, the ticking of the clock, the succession of day and night, birth and death, the in-breath and the out-breath, and winter and spring all point to the same moral that action alternates with rest. The moon also with its waxing and waning, its disappearance and reappearance tells the same tale. Both action and rest have their own Dharma, the law that governs them. We make the fullest use of both, by ourselves conforming to their inherent Dharma. Night is meant for rest and the day for action. The sluggard who sleeps away the day and spends the night in revelry is transgressing the Dharma, the eternal law of Nature. He pays the penalty by physical ill health or sourness of temper, which is certainly worse than ill health. The burglar, who hides his face during day-time and begins his nefarious activities when honest

people are slumbering in their beds, is not only transgressing the eternal Dharma, but also is breaking the law framed by the State for the safe-guarding of property and is sure to be caught in the long run, although his cunning may help him to escape once or twice with impunity. Youth and old age have their own codes of conduct; certain transgressions, which are readily excused in youth, are extremely reprehensible if committed by old age. On the other hand, certain exemptions, which age may claim with good grace, will be unseemly if demanded by youth. The recognition of the difference of duties and the guiding of life in conformity with the principles of Dharma leads to a happy youth and equally happy old age.

* * *

Dharma sustains human society. It is for the upholding of the Dharma, that the Supreme Lord incarnates again and again. When He came as Sri Krishna, he delivered the Gita and has clearly explained the nature of Dharma, and has demonstrated its permanent value in an ever-changing world. Philosophical religions such as Buddhism have given a place to Dharma, higher than that ascribed to personal gods, whose whims and wiles the mythologies of all religions sufficiently expatiate. The working of the Dharma is inexorable. Human justice and man-made laws are only attempts at approximation. No artist hopes to succeed in painting the full glory of the sunset, although he sees it repeated by Nature times without number. Jurists and law givers may like critics and artists attempt to represent the Dharma, as best as they can. Their success is bound to be limited; for the Dharma eludes verbal representation even as the sunset eludes the painter's brush. This does not mean that the Dharma is difficult of comprehension; it

is written in the hearts of all beings in indelible characters, the humble individual, who has learnt to listen to the still small voice within, often comprehends the Dharma better than the professor of law, who is caught in the unending tangle of legal phraseology. The letter often killeth the spirit.

* * *

'There is nothing higher for a Kshatriya than a righteous war,' says the Gita; and the Gita as we all know, was not composed in a Himalayan monastery; it was delivered in the great battle-field of Kurukshetra, where the contending parties fought for world-domination. It is the Dharma of the Kshatriya to fight, but the war in which he engages himself ought to be a righteous war. We know very well that in all wars each combatant calls the other fellow the aggressor and himself the upholder of righteousness. Where the truth lies is another question, but the very fact that the claim is made in the name of righteousness shows that man is not altogether lost. Even if righteousness is not there, the combatant vociferously claims it showing that he fears the Dharma which in this case expresses itself as world-opinion. Do we need further argument to show that if Dharma, righteousness, is truly present, the knight who goes forth to battle to redress human wrongs would become invincible. 'My strength is as the strength of ten, because my heart is pure' are the words which the poet puts into the mouth of a true knight. What is known in the West as chivalry is known in India as Kshatriya-Dharma.

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Throughout the long course of human history wars have been fought. The Gods fought the Titans. Lucifer led a revolt against the Eternal King of Heaven. Sri Ramachandra, the Man-god, routed Ravana, the mighty scion

of the race of Asuras. The war between the Pandavas and the Kauravas was an extremely fratricidal strife in which many Kshatriya families of Ancient India were wiped out. The Greeks of antiquity led an expedition against the Trojans. All the great epic poems of the world have war for their theme. *Arma virumque cano*, 'Arms and the man I sing' are the opening words of Virgil's immortal epic. Homer invokes the Muse saying,

Achilles' wrath, to Greece the direful
spring,
Of woes unnumber'd, heavenly goddess
sing.

We teach the epics to our children, we glorify the soldier, taking care, of course, to show the bright side of the picture. How can we hope to make the young less war-minded? So long as human nature is what it is, with its loves and hates, its ambitions and rivalries, conflicts are bound to be. But then there are the rules of the game. If these are strictly followed, the outcome is bound to be honourable to both the victor and the vanquished. A war fought according to well defined rules may not leave any bitterness behind. The bitterness of the vanquished is dangerous for the victor as is evidenced by contemporary events. We, the men and women living in the world to-day, are the unfortunate witnesses to a terrible conflict unprecedented in the annals of the human race, and it is more than probable that there will be wars in the future for a very long time to come. For aught we know, the pacifist's vision of perpetual peace may be nothing but a pleasing mirage. If war is unavoidable, humanity to save itself from total extinction would do well to ask the war-lords to define the rules of the game. World-opinion ought to be mobilized in that direction. There are armament-makers and war-makers all over the world and

the gambling for the command of the greater resources of the world is as prevalent among the ruling classes of the world, as the gambling for lesser stakes is among the poor. There is a psychological necessity for war. War fought according to well defined rules will be certainly more exciting for the combatants than an international football match or a pugilistic contest between two boxers competing for world-championship. While providing the necessary excitement for the men actually engaged in the contest, it will save them from the unsoldierly and cowardly business of killing women and children. The ancient Kshatriyas of this country, with their noble traditions of true valour would never have tolerated tank warfare and aerial bombing which rain death indiscriminately on helpless women and children.

* * *

'Peace hath her victories no less glorious than war' is one of the favourite citations of the pacifist. The philosopher will pertinently remark that peace has its iniquities quite as marked as those of war. 'Why do they prate of the blessings of peace, we have made them a curse,' says the poet and concludes his denunciation with these words: 'Is it peace or war? better, war! loud war by land and by sea, war with a thousand battles, and shaking a hundred thrones.'

In those early days, when man had not lost his intimacy with the Deity, God plainly told the Hebrew prophets that if the people failed to keep the covenant, He would send plagues and wars and pestilences in their midst. This fact is recorded in the Old Testament. The covenant of God may be interpreted as the Dharma indelibly inscribed in the heart of humanity. Instead of appeasing a potential enemy, how much better it would have been if the leaders of the people had set about

appeasing God by strictly following the path of righteousness. We are told that in this war nations are transgressing the international law and the rules of warfare. This leads us to the conviction that it would have been ever so much better for the world, if international treaties and 'gentlemen's' agreements were written in the hearts of nations instead of being committed to scraps of paper. This world, with its two thousand million human beings and numberless varieties of flora and fauna, all pulsating with life, cannot be a mere mechanical assemblage of blind forces. This common mother, who has given birth to, and continues to sustain millions of sentient beings, cannot be a mere insentient globe spinning about in space. When we consider the world as a living organism, we are forced to the conclusion that it must possess a heart, a heart throbbing with life. The Dharma of the world is evidently inscribed in the heart of the world. We certainly refer to it, when we speak of appealing to world-opinion. Nations that cultivate a world-outlook have a better chance of getting closer to the heart of the world than those that choose to maintain an attitude of isolation. Such isolation may be cultural, political or economic; whichever it might be, the nation that holds itself aloof from the life-currents of the world has no chance of survival; it would become atrophied and wither away like a limb that refuses to work harmoniously with the rest of the body. Indians in the more glorious periods of their history actively thought of the welfare of the world. Renascent nationalism would certainly strengthen

itself by actively setting about to establish contact with other nations.

* * *

All religions are based upon the Dharma. The practice of religion, therefore, helps the common man as well as the philosopher to understand the Dharma and also to re-establish the closer communion with the Deity which according to all historic religions the human race enjoyed at an earlier period of its history. Philosophical and theological studies may not be available to all but the lives of the prophets are available to one and all. Buddha, Christ, Ramakrishna and other great Saviours with their all-embracing love are the true models for humanity. They are the embodiment of the Dharma and they are accessible to the artisan in his workshop, to the farmer behind his plough, to simple fishermen, to women, and to children. We can rise to our full moral stature by trying to imitate them. Alexanders, Caesars, and Napoleons can never touch the core of our being; Platos and Shakespeares, and Goethes are but imperfect models, although in their own lines they have risen to heights unattainable to us. The Dharma that is indelibly written in the hearts of all human beings finds its fullest expression in the great Saviours of the world. The only way for humanity to reach the goal of its endeavours is to walk in the path chalked out by them. They alone can ring out the darkness and moral chaos of the world and make us valiant men and free, with larger hearts and kindlier hands.

MAYAVATI,

15th November, 1940.

TWO CULTURAL MOVEMENTS—RAMAKRISHNAISM AND MARXISM

By PROF. AKSHAYA KUMAR BANERJEE, M.A.

[Prof. A. K. Bannerjee's thoughtful and thought-provoking contribution touches the very core of the most-pressing problem that confronts the human society of to-day.—Ed.]

There are at present two dynamic international cultural movements, which are progressively attracting the attention of the advanced thinkers of most of the nations of the civilized world. The one is the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement and the other is the Marx-Lenin movement. Ramakrishnadeva and Karl Marx flourished in the same age in the centres of two distinct civilizations, and their lives and precepts also were characteristically distinct. The movements originating from their teachings are in all outward appearance fundamentally different from each other. Sri Ramakrishna was the embodiment of the soul of India in the modern age, and Karl Marx may be said to have represented the soul of Modern Europe. The outlook of the one was naturally and perhaps necessarily distinct from that of the other. Their philosophies of life and society were outwardly antagonistic to each other. They looked upon the human race and the course of its evolution from two opposite points of view. The solutions they offered for the most puzzling problems of the modern age are based on essentially different principles. Nevertheless, both these movements owe their origin to and derive their strength from the same inner urge of the soul of the human race to get rid of the continual state of warfare, civil and military,—individual, communal and national,—economic, political, social and religious,—which appears to have somehow become the characteristic feature of humanity in

the course of its evolution and which in modern times is becoming more and more hideous and soul-destructive with the development of the intellectual and organizing powers of men and the progress of their conquest of the natural forces and exploitation of the material resources of the world.

The inner aim of both these movements is to establish peace, harmony and unity in the human society, to bring about a reconciliation between the individual and the collective interests of men,—to replace the spirit of competition by the spirit of service, the spirit of the assertion of rights by the spirit of obedience to the call of duty, the spirit of self-aggrandizement (whether individual or communal or national) by the spirit of devotion to collective welfare, for the regulation of human activities. The human soul has an inherent demand for peace, harmony and unity within the nature of every individual as well as in the relations of every individual to his environments. The growth of life depends upon the progressive realization of harmonious relationship within and without. The absence of it implies impending death. True to the general principle of development, the spirit of humanity always and everywhere longs for more and more perfect adjustment of relationship and more and more lasting peace and harmony between men and men, nay, between men and all animals and all forces of the world. Unfortunately the reigning spirit of the modern world—

(some people may call it the Satanic spirit)—has put down or led astray this spirit of humanity and brought it to the brink of a precipice. With the name of 'lasting peace' on their lips men are falling upon one another, with all the murderous propensities and capacities which they have studiously developed with the progress of their knowledge of the world and the worldly forces, and through the path of mutual destruction (whether by the slow process of exploitation or by the swift method of violent warfare) all the parties (exploiters as well as the exploited, the victorious as well as the vanquished) are rapidly advancing towards the permanent peace of death. This is the form which the modern civilization has assumed. The immortal spirit of humanity is afraid of death. It has naturally revolted against this form of so-called civilization and is seeking for ways of escape from annihilation. Movements have been started with the banner of peace and unity in different countries, and human hearts are more and more responding to their appeals.

Of all such movements the one originating from the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and the other originating from the philosophy and activity of Karl Marx appear to be most dynamic and full of potentialities. Their modes of appeal are of course different, the one being truly Indian and ethico-spiritual and the other characteristically European and economic-political. Sri Ramakrishna's message to the modern world is that the societies and states have to be reconstructed on a spiritual basis,—on the basis of the essentially spiritual nature of man and its inherent demand for self-fulfilment in the spiritual realm in and through its unconstrained self-expressions in this sensible world. Karl Marx's message is that the societies and states should be

reconstructed on an economic basis,—on the basis of equal rights of men to live and to enjoy in this world as members of the same social organism. The appeal of the message of Sri Ramakrishna is specially to the spiritual and moral consciousness of those who *have*, and that of Marx to the consciousness of the economic and political rights of those who *have not*.

Sri Ramakrishna seeks to awaken in men the consciousness that the true fulfilment of *having* lies in *giving*,—that the voluntary employment of whatever one *has or acquires* in this world in the loving service of those who *have not* is the sole and sure path for the attainment of one's best and highest interests,—that what is ordinarily regarded and admired as self-sacrifice is the true form of love for and devotion to one's true self. The true interest of the individual is, when the spiritual consciousness is awakened, experienced to be identical with his serviceableness for the collective interest of the society, especially for the interests of the poor and downtrodden fellow members of the society. Perfection of the self and happiness of others ought to be the principle of life, since the former is attainable through contributions to the latter.

The philosophical basis of this message is furnished by Vedanta, which proclaims with no uncertain voice that the same Supreme Spirit—the same God—dwells as the true soul in every human body,—nay, in the body of every living creature, that all men—nay, all creatures—are essentially Divine, and that the realization of this Divinity in one's own self as well as in all is the *summum bonum* of human life. Accordingly, the voluntary offering of what one *has* in the service of others amounts to the worship of one's own true self in its manifold appearances,—the worship

of the Divine in the human,—the worship of the Infinite and Eternal in Its finite and mortal embodiments,—the progressive realization of the identity of one's own self with the universe. The deep-seated yearning of the human soul for self-realization, being freed from the veil of ignorance and the consequent narrowness of outlook, becomes a dynamic force, impelling the individual to sacrifice all objects of his sensuous desire and attachment for the welfare of the society, which is perceived as a more permanent and magnificent embodiment of his Self—a Virât Purusha,—containing within itself shortlived and individualized embodiments of the same Self. Thus the awakenment of spiritual consciousness brings about a happy reconciliation between giving and gaining, between sacrifice and enjoyment, between altruism and egoism, between self-dedication to the good of all and self-fulfilment, between what are called socialism and individualism.

The appeal of this message to the *have-nots* also is no less significant. In truth, the differentiation between *haves* and *have-nots* is artificial and arbitrary. There is no rational ground for any real classification of the human society between *haves* and *have-nots*. Every man, however poor and distressed, possesses something and has a sense of ownership of and attachment to it. He would not like to part with it, except for some greater gain. On the other hand, no man, however rich and high-placed in the eyes of others, is without wants, without a sense of *have-not*, without any look of envy upon others. It is only in a comparative sense that we can speak of the *haves* and the *have-nots*. The spiritual message from India wants to awaken in the minds of every one who possesses anything, however little or however great, the moral consciousness of duty to all,—duty to

the society to which he belongs and which represents in a grander and more permanent form his own true self. It teaches the highest as well as the lowest to dedicate what they have to the worship of their true Divine Self in the form of loving service to their fellow beings and inspires them with the idea that this is the most appropriate means of their rising higher and higher in the scale of humanity and ultimately realizing their Divinity. To those who are depressed with the sense of *have-not*, who are economically poor and socially and politically downtrodden, and who as a result of the unfortunate circumstances in which they have been placed have lost all faith in and respect for themselves, the special appeal of the message is for rousing a dynamic consciousness of humanity and Divinity in themselves, for shaking off their depressed and slavish mentality and standing on their own legs with self-respect and self-confidence, for marching onward in the path of self-realization by dint of their own disciplined endeavours without entertaining any feeling of envy or malice towards their more fortunate brothers and sisters. It teaches them that they are not really so low and weak and helpless as they erroneously think themselves to be, that their destinies do not really depend upon the mercy or cruelty of those who have by dint of their own efforts become comparatively prosperous and powerful in the society, that they have neither been deprived of their fortunes by the latter nor can they hope to attain power and prosperity by any malicious attempt at depriving them of theirs. They are the masters of their own destinies. They have by their own past misdeeds brought the misfortunes upon themselves. They can get rid of these misfortunes and become as great as or even greater than those they envy, by the

proper performance of their duties at present, by the awakening of the Divine powers which are latent in them, by the cultivation of self-confidence, self-reliance, self-discipline and self-exertion. Arise, awake, rouse Brahman within yourselves, render services to the society according to your resources, and advance onward and onward in the path of self-realization, which is another name for God-realization,—this is the Divine message to the poor.

The message teaches the rich to see God in the poor as well as in themselves, and teaches the poor also to see God in themselves as well as in the rich. Self-respect and mutual respect should reign in the human society. A spirit of mutual service, mutual love and regard, mutual co-operation for the self-fulfilment of each, should determine the courses of activities of every individual and every section of humanity. The Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement is an organized attempt for awakening this spirit in the modern mind.

Art and literature, science and philosophy, agriculture and industry, trade and commerce, which have immensely developed in the modern age through competition and rivalry amongst individuals and groups under the urge of selfish instinct, should have their proper places in the society to be reconstructed on the spiritual basis. But the spirit of worship to God and self-discipline for self-realization through loving service to humanity should guide and control their courses of development. They should not be, as they generally are in the existing order of the society, organized means of domination and exploitation of the weak by the strong, of the less intelligent by the more intelligent, of the peasants and labourers by the aristocrats and capitalists. The wise, powerful and prosperous people, who would be born

and brought up in the spiritual atmosphere of the reconstructed society, should be saturated and enlivened by the noblest moral and religious ideas and sentiments radiating from the God-centric lives and teachings of the spiritually enlightened members of the society, and should always be conscious that the true success of their lives lies in their spiritual self-fulfilment, which can be attained only through the application of their wisdom, power and prosperity to the welfare of their less talented and less fortunate fellow beings and of the society as a whole with a devotional attitude of worship to God.

The spiritual idealism, which is in truth implanted in the depth of every human heart, should have to be made so dynamic in the spheres of human thoughts and desires and actions through art and literature, laws and customs, education and organized propaganda, that the people of the upper layers of the society should be inspired by the idea that their knowledge, their wealth, their organizing genius, their social facilities, their political advantages, are really Divine trusts to them, that they would prove unworthy of them if they consider them as their own and utilize them for their own earthly benefit and self-aggrandizement, and that the Divine purpose can be truly accomplished if they avail themselves of these opportunities for offering worship to Him in the forms of sincere services to the society,—in the forms of earnest attempts to remove ignorance and illiteracy, poverty and distress, disease and weakness, fear and hatred, depression and self-diffidence, slavery and inequity from the society.

Differences of intellectual powers and organizing talents, differences of physical strength and mental courage, differences of temperament and character, these must always be in every form of society,

and there must accordingly be differences of position and prestige, influence and authority, and also of prosperity and enjoyment, in spite of all attempts at equalizing the people by offering equal opportunities to all. But peace, harmony and unity have to be established in the human society in the midst of these differences. It is the voluntary service and sacrifice on the part of the superior grades of people, it is the willing acceptance and recognition by them as their equals and kindreds of the people who are inferior to them from the earthly point of view, that can bring about any real peace, harmony and unity in the society. The inspiration for this can come only from spiritual idealism,—from the consciousness that the spiritual interest of human life is superior to the material interest, that the ideal of God-realization is far higher and nobler than the ideals of Pleasure, Power and Prosperity in this world, and that this ideal can be best realized in and through the dedication of earthly possessions to the service of the *have-nots* with a religious attitude of mind. Such spiritual idealism would find expression in economic socialism without any class-war or violent revolution.

In the absence of this religious spirit reigning in the consciousness of the people and the constitution of the society, the society is bound to be a field of endless battle among divergent earthly interests, the spirit of competition, rivalry, envy, malice, hatred and hostility is sure to create warring divisions among men, exploitation by the people who are for the time being in an advantageous position and revolutionary conspiracy of the exploited to dislodge them from that position and take vengeance upon them cannot but vitiate the normal order of the society. Those who become earnest friends of the poor exploited masses to-day and

employ their opportunities and organizing abilities to create a revolution against the exploiters and oppressors, will, if successful, themselves form a class of exploiters and oppressors to-morrow. Thus revolution and counter-revolution will go on. It is only the religious spirit that can keep under check the spirit of exploitation, which is inherent in man's animal nature. The predominance of man's spiritual nature over his economic (i.e. animal) nature can alone bring peace to the human society.

Sri Ramakrishna, by his Sâdhanâ and realization, freed religion also from the current misconceptions about it. Religion, he proclaimed, does not truly consist in any particular dogma or creed, in any particular conception about God and His relation to man and the world, in any particular mode of worship or self-discipline, in any particular set of rites and customs and practices, or in any particular form of church-organization. Religion essentially means the realization of the spiritual or Divine nature of the human self,—the realization of Divinity in humanity. Different creeds etc. which pass by the name of religion and which are apparently conflicting with one another, are only diverse *paths* to Religion. Religion is one and universal, though religions,—i.e. paths to Religion,—are many. Every religious man, whatever path he may adopt, must have respect for all paths, since they lead to the same goal. The ideal immanent in every recognized religious system is the progressive spiritualization of human nature,—the progressive realization of Divinity which pertains to the true self of man.

Accordingly every form of religious discipline,—intellectual, emotional, moral and practical,—is meant for gradually awakening in man the consciousness of unity between the individ-

ual self and the social self and the universal Self, the feeling of love for all as the true expression of his love for his own higher Self, the spirit of charity and service to all as the true way of the fulfilment of his own practical life. It is from the standpoint of this universal spiritual ideal that every system of religion has to be accepted, respected and loved. A follower of any particular system of religion has to live a spiritual life in accordance with its injunctions, but has to judge his progress by the universal standard. The higher a man rises in religious life, the wider and deeper must be his sympathy and love, the more vivid must be his experience of the Divinity within himself and in all men, the more deeply must he feel the identity of his own interest with the interest of the society, the more natural and spontaneous must be his charity and service and sacrifice.

Karl Marx, though inspired by the same ideal of peace, harmony and equality and prompted by the same revolt of the human heart against the present state of disunion and discord and restless struggle in the human society, approached the problem from an altogether different point of view and with an altogether different conception of human nature. His conclusions were based on the data obtained from the empirical study of European history. He found no ground for putting faith in the innate goodness of the human soul or for regarding man as essentially a spiritual being. To him a man was an animal like other animals in his inherent demands and essential requirements. A man belonged to a superior order of animals, mainly in this that his nature was much more complex, his requirements were much more various, he was endowed with free intelligence and organizing powers, he could exercise

considerable influence upon the courses of events which contributed to his happiness and misery. Destinies of men as well as their ideals and sentiments, their moral and religious consciousnesses, their desires and ambitions, their senses of value and criteria of rightness and goodness,—all these were the products of the economic and political situations in which they were placed and which again they had the power to modify and change. Men were the products as well as the makers of history. Marx accordingly decided that in order to emancipate the society from the present state of inequality, inequity and continual civil and military warfare, the present structures of the society had to be radically changed.

Having no faith in the spiritual nature of man, Marx found no ground for believing that the people who were placed in advantageous positions by the present order of the society, who became wealthy and powerful and learned by ingenuously availing themselves of the opportunities offered by the present situation in their own favour at the expense of the millions of their fellow beings, could in any way be prevailed upon to sacrifice those advantages and to part with their wealth and power of their own accord for the sake of any spiritual ideal or for any advantage to be gained in the imaginary life after death. They might make charities, they might show active sympathy to the poor and the depressed, they might try by means of generous measures to win the admiration and devotion of the poor labourers at whose expense and through whose foolish co-operation they were flourishing. All these were good and noble contrivances for the consolidation of their power and authority and to the stabilization of their economic prosperity. But they would never be ready to exchange their

positions with those upon whom they shower their charities or to recognize them as their equals. It is only under compulsion that rich men embrace poverty and men in authority are deprived of their position. Individuals may at times be prepared to make voluntary sacrifices, but classes or communities never.

Hence such a situation has to be created that the rich and the high may be compelled to come down to the same level with the common masses, at least so far as the articles of physical necessity and ordinary comfort are concerned. There should be no distinction between rich and poor, high and low, strong and weak in the society. Such distinction can be obliterated and real equality can be brought about in the human society, if *the right to private property is not recognized by the state and the society*. This is a great revolutionary idea, because the conception of private property has all along been regarded almost as innate in the human consciousness and *a priori* true. Perhaps the most remarkable contribution of Marx to human ideology is that he initiated or inspired a movement against private property. All property truly belongs to the society. Members of the society ought to and must devote the energy and talents, with which they are endowed by nature and for the development and application of which opportunities are and should be offered by the social order, to the enhancement of the prosperity, power and prestige of the society as a whole. But they should never regard themselves as the proprietors of what they produce or acquire. They should work as limbs of the society, and the fruits of their work must go to the society for the enjoyment of all. Every man should obtain from the society what he requires for his maintenance, for his education and self-

development, for his work and service to the society. The dignity and honour of a man should lie in the value of the contributions he makes to the society, and not in what he enjoys, not in his wealth and grandeur, power and authority, high birth and prestige. Destruction of private property and establishment of social ownership of all property was conceived by the Marxian school as the most effective means of bringing about harmony, peace and unity in human society.

But how can such an object be achieved? Appeal to the moral and spiritual sense of the privileged classes would be of no avail. Moral and spiritual ideal, as history has conclusively demonstrated, can never be strong enough to destroy or even subdue their materialistic greed and ambition for power and authority. Religion, far from producing universal brotherhood and establishing peace and harmony and equality in the human society, has all along been a principal ground of inequality, hostility and vanity and unrepentant oppression of the weak by the strong. History has records of the most inhuman atrocities in the name of religion. In what appears outwardly as peaceful society the rich and shrewd privileged classes exploit the religious precepts for keeping the poor toiling ignorant masses contented with their distressful conditions. The Sermon on the Mount is quoted for eulogizing poverty, meekness, humility, privation, etc. and giving these people hope of the Kingdom of Heaven. But those who quote it practise just the opposite of these virtues and try to lull the victims of their oppression to sleep with such sweet words and soothing stories. Religion thus operates as opium to the oppressed millions and keeps them ignorant of their inherent rights and dormant powers.

Hence the Marxian movement attempts to release the human mind from what is regarded as the dehumanizing magical influence of religion and appeals to the lacerated hearts of the exploited masses to be conscious of their miserable conditions, to be conscious of the valuable contributions they make to the development of the social and national fortune by the sweat of their brow and of the cruel treatment they receive in return from those who are puffed up by their labour, to be conscious of their rights to get suitable and sufficient means of livelihood and education and self-development as members of the society and to be treated as equals and friends by those who serve the society with their intellectual capacities, to be conscious of the powers which lie latent in them and which they can make the privileged classes feel through proper combination and organization. Thus it seeks to create a revolutionary mentality in the masses, to rouse their spirits against the fortunate classes, to unify the *have-nots* on the basis of their common grievances against the *haves* and the dynamic consciousness of their common miserable lots. They have to wrest the powers and privileges from the *haves*.

Thus the necessary conclusion is that the destruction of the notion of private property, which is the fundamental curse of the present order of the society, and the socialization of the fruits of the labours of all grades of people, which is the only solution of the present problems, and the only way to the establishment of peace, harmony and brotherhood, can be expected to be accomplished, not through any religious idealism and voluntary sacrifice on the part of the privileged classes, but through the awakening and organization of the exploited masses in revolt against the former and the wresting of political

authority and power for creating a new order by them. This is the message of Revolution of Marx and his school of thought.

The message naturally appeals to the hearts of the sufferers all over the world, who are numerically far stronger than the enjoyers in the present order of the society. It is also far easier to work up the feelings of envy and malice than those of universal love and yearning for God-realization. The message has got an additional dynamic power from the success of the Revolutionary movement in Russia under the great leadership of Lenin, (though the Russian movement may have important points of difference with the Marxian message). In industrialized Europe the labourers can be more easily roused and organized against the capitalists than in the agricultural countries, where most men have some property. The big imperialistic and capitalistic wars offer in their after-effects great opportunities for the revolution of the masses. Such visible successes and possibilities of success tend to popularize the message. In India the national movement of Mahatma Gandhi is based on the same spiritual principle, as is typified in the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement. But it is as yet far from attaining any tangible success in the form of the acquisition of political power in the country. Hence Sri Ramakrishna's message has not yet been able to enter into or even approach the hearts of the rank and file in different countries. But the superiority of this message is being recognized by the noblest thinkers all over the world.

We cannot prophesy how the Ruler of the destiny of the human race will shape its history after the present war, which really seems to be a war for the destruction of the present order of the society. If the present war cannot serve

its purpose and create a new mentality in the surviving population, we shall have to wait for another more dreadful and devastating war in course of a generation. On the grave of the present civilization based on the conception of the intrinsic worth of money and power and animal pleasure, a new civilization based on the higher nature of man must arise. Both the thought-currents referred to above will contribute to the creation of this new order. Apparently the Marxian movement is an antithesis to the Ramakrishnaite movement. But the life of humanity demands a living synthesis of the two. Peace and unity, which the human soul demands, must be attained not only in the moral and spiritual planes, but also in the eco-

nomie and political planes of human existence. But no real peace and harmony and equality and unity can ever be brought about by class-hatred and class-war, by state control and the so-called proletariat dictatorship, by emphasis upon the baser aspects of human nature and external pressure for their subjugation. The spiritual nature of man can alone be the basis of unity, and this must be awakened in all men. Social, political and economic revolution based on moral and spiritual idealism appears to be what the present situation demands for emancipating the human society from the whirlpool of mutual hostilities and continual mental and physical wars which characterize the present order of civilization.

NEW WORLD SYNTHESIS

BY ELIOT C. CLARK

[Mr. Eliot Candee Clark, A.N.A. of New York, U.S.A. is an Artist, Lecturer and Author. His contribution exhibits his wide sympathies and thoughtful appraising of the fundamental values of life.—Ed.]

The realistic conception of the world of to-day which is based upon power and its material manifestation does not take into consideration that other less apparent and invisible power which is latent in aspiration and the spiritual inheritance of different peoples. That its manifestation may differ is but the differing mode of its expression. Fundamentally it is the eternal quest of Reality. The will to live is in the liberation of life.

At no time in the history of the world has material production been greater, and probably at no time has there been greater unrest. The solution cannot be merely by domination or economic exploitation.

Progress is so inseparably associated in the popular mind with mechanized

convenience that we do not realize that man may progress towards the abyss as well as towards the heights.

The dazzling spectacle of modern invention has been so outwardly alluring that man has lost relation with his inner self. In consequence he has been victimized by incessant desire and drowned in the labyrinth of his own delusion. The realization of life and the mode of living have lost their reciprocal relation. But man in his potential Being has remained unchanged.

It is apparent that whereas modern means of communication and industrial distribution tend to standardize and delocalize the mode of living, that the biological and historical development

of varied peoples is in a different and often disparate state of evolution. The East is suddenly confronted with an industrialized world which is not born from its integral evolution and is quite apart from its natural tradition. Its new leaders are endeavouring to assimilate and utilize this mechanized civilization and traditional culture is everywhere in retreat.

In the Western world materialistic quest of Reality has ended in its illusion. Money power has been unable to coin contentment. Inherited wealth has demonstrated its dangers and turned its gold into sensuous dross. Economic disintegration is but an indication of the inefficiency of human co-operation. The search for the hidden treasure begins anew.

It is in this quest that the ancient wisdom is being re-discovered. The outward lure of life is returning to the inner light of realization. For what can the world mean apart from experience and what the experience apart from the experiencer? 'Know thyself' echoes from the silence of the past, the echo of the eternal recurrence.

The 'mystical' East is being transformed by the 'material' West; whereas the invisible undercurrents of the East are permeating the thought of the West. Thus the traditional distinction of the East and West is losing its theoretical significance and transformation ends in meeting.

This is far other than the orientalization of Western thought or the materialization of the East. It is rather a new orientation. This can arise only from the living quest of Reality, not in the fixity of theoretical belief. Science has been the search-light of the West. Its revelation has given new meaning to ancient wisdom. Its light has cleared away the debris of barren accumulation and pierced the shadow

of theological tyranny. Having reached the theoretical point of the unknown, its inquisition is finished, and metaphysics posits again its livingness in faith rather than doubt which is death. Science remains confined to the phenomenal world of manifestation and theoretical conclusion, while spirit is released in its living realization. This knows no orientation other than its own realization.

What is the genesis of this awakening? It is the renewed awareness of the limitations of the analytical mind and the recognition of that which is the Source of mind. Mind is both a projection and a reaction and in consequence is in ceaseless change, the victim of its own manifestation. It becomes bound by the world of phenomena and is freed by the noumena or the realization of its own substrata or Self. Analysis is regenerated by synthesis. Thus instead of the rigidity of abstract conclusions and the tyranny of tradition the spirit soars again in the empyrean of the unknown, the infinite air of freedom. God is re-born not as an ecclesiastical conclusion but as a living verity, the Source of life.

The 'mystical' East which was for the West but an image of its own aspiration and longing for escape, re-appears as the eternal present; the psychical meeting of the East and West as the changeless and the changeful, the hidden treasure discovered in the debris of disintegration. Old mental boundaries have passed away; ancient impetus has spent itself in habit. Life is in transformation. The scientific quest of Truth leads again to the dark chamber of the mind whence it began, wherein faith rather than doubt, can alone enlighten it.

Is the spirit of the East compatible with that of the West? Is spirit limited by its locale, chained for ever

to the subconscious self? These abstractions are in fact but names, a generic distinction based upon mental habits, the degenerate result of a once living genesis.

In the West mysticism came to be associated with occultism and other-worldliness, the psychic gratification of unfulfilled desire, the transposition of the will to be, to the illusion of the Beyond. But in the East, mysticism is the recognition of the eternal Presence, its indwelling bliss, the everlasting Now.

For nearly two thousand years the civilization of the West has been endeavouring to assimilate the revelation of the East in the universal symbol of the Christ Spirit. Now from the ruins, as once upon a time in ancient Rome, comes the rebirth, the eternal recurrence, the timeless voice: 'It is here; It is now; It always was; It always will be.'

It is not in outward sign that the new revelation is announced but in the radiation of living realization; not in the dogma of political prohibition and wilful domination; not in suppression but in emergence. Destruction ends in transformation. The modern tyranny is but the aggrandizement of the egoistic

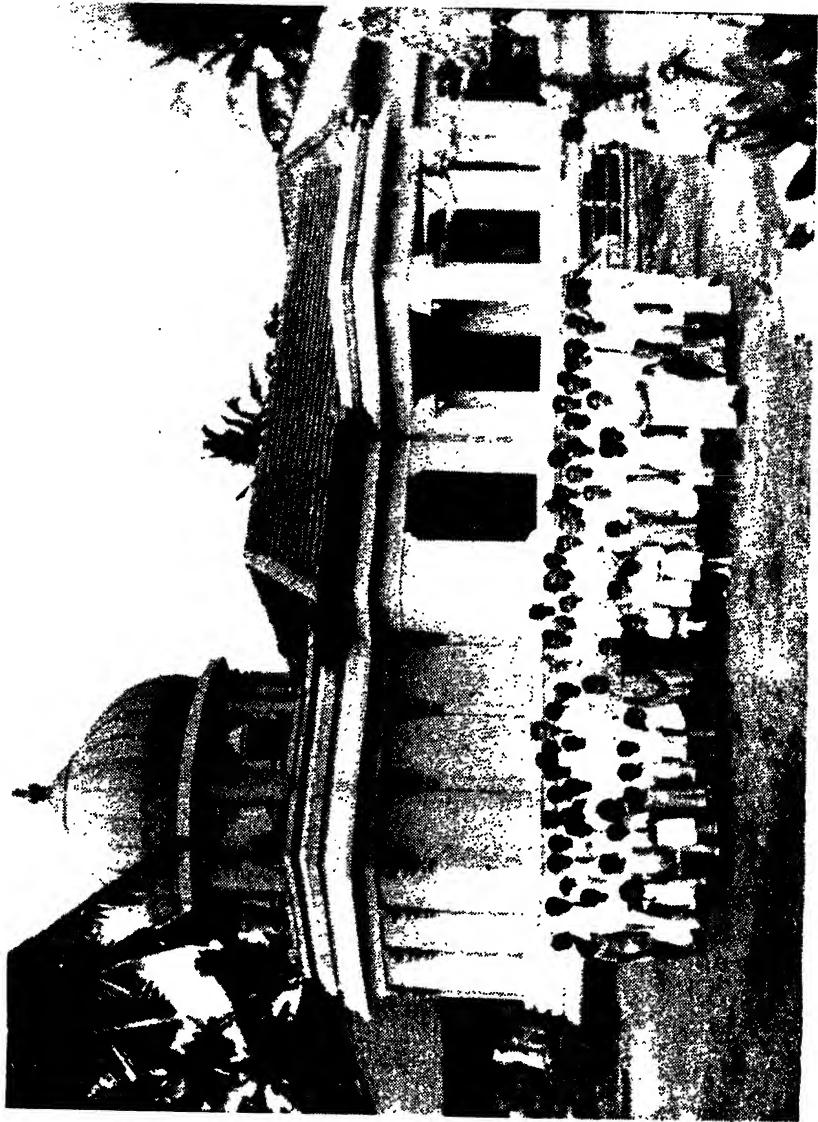
will to power, the maturation of its own past. Destruction is the end of a series and therefore the beginning of a new succession.

Like stars which shine forth when the mists pass away, so in the spiritual firmament that surrounds the world, innumerable guiding lights illumine the darkness and indicate the way. Souls separated by distance but transcending space; separated in time, the voice of the timeless uniting.

This is the spiritual message of the East and the West of to-day, the new world synthesis, not the inseparable barrier of prejudice and mental preconception; not the finality of estranged dogmas; but the nostalgia of the soul, the quest of Reality, the search for hidden treasure.

What is the meaning of emergence, but the recurrence of that which does not either go or come, for ever constant. 'The face of Truth is covered with a brilliant golden lid; that do Thou remove, O Fosterer, for the law of Truth, for sight.'

In the face of present tribulation is this but a fable? Count not the law by numbers. Without the numeral One, can numbers be?



THE RAMAKRISHNA TEMPLE, COLOMBO

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION AND INDO-CEYLON CULTURAL RELATIONS

BY K. S. RAMASWAMI, M.A., L.T.

[We understand that the State Council of Ceylon has recently passed a Bill to change the name of Ceylon to Sri Lanka. May the sons and daughters of Sri Lanka join hands and without distinction of caste, creed or nationality build a future more glorious than the past of their great country is the sincere prayer of all who are interested in the welfare of the Island.—Ed.]

The island of Rameswaram lying between India and Ceylon brings vividly into one's mind some of the incidents mentioned in the Ramayana. The bridge connecting Ceylon to the mainland, said to have been built by the monkey chieftains of old, has not been wholly erased by time. Nevertheless, modern scholarship attempts to deny to Ceylon the association which ancient tradition has bestowed upon it. Leaving the scholars to discuss and settle among themselves the authenticity or otherwise of Rama's Bridge, let us get on to plain history which in unmistakable terms tells us that twenty-two centuries ago, Emperor Asoka sent the first Buddhist missionary to Ceylon to the court of King Devanampiya Tissa and thereby erected a cultural bridge between India and Ceylon. Two centuries prior to that, we are told, King Vijaya, the first historic king of Ceylon, made a matrimonial alliance with the Pandya dynasty of Madura. Throughout the centuries, there has been very close intercourse between Ceylon and the mainland.

Buddhism was the official religion, and side by side with it Hinduism also grew particularly in the northern and eastern districts colonized by Tamils from South India. Pali was the sacred language and even to this day Ceylon enjoys an international reputation for Pali scholarship. Many priests and laymen and even some kings were well versed in Sanskrit as evidenced by the

fact that King Parakrama Bahu II (A.D. 1236-1271) bore the title of Kalikāla-Sāhitya-Sarvajña-Pandita. Sinhalese and Tamil were also highly developed and culturally Ceylon was one with the mainland, until the arrival of the Portuguese in the beginning of the sixteenth century. From time immemorial Ceylon was famous for its spices, ivory, pearls and precious stones. It also occupies a strategic position being on the ocean highways to the East. It was the spices of the 'spicy isle' and its strategic position that attracted the commercial nations of the West. In 1517 the Portuguese erected a fort in Colombo and established their rule over the maritime districts of the west coast for a period of about 140 years. After the Portuguese the Dutch came and held the same districts for about the same period of time. The hilly country in the centre of the Island with Kandy as the capital was free from foreign domination. In 1815 with the fall of Kandy, the whole island passed into the hands of the British. With the advent of the Portuguese, Christianity was introduced into the Island. In the latter half of the sixteenth century, St. Francis Xavier, the great Jesuit missionary, visited Ceylon under the patronage of the Portuguese rulers and effected many conversions to the new faith. The Portuguese did not favour religious neutrality and at their hands, the old culture was slowly undermined and

power and official prestige went to those who accepted the new religion. This accounts for the fact that even to-day some of the leading Buddhist families have Western names. The Dutch were tolerant to Buddhism,

who established the first English school in the East in their Seminary at Jaffna in North Ceylon, introduced higher Western education and it is noteworthy to remember that when the Madras University was incorporated

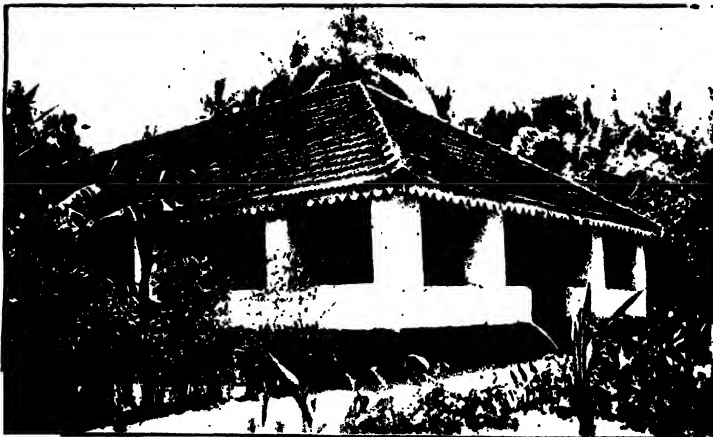


R. K. MISSION TAMIL SCHOOL, KALLADI-UPPODAI, BATTICALOA

Hinduism and Islam. They bequeathed to the Island the Roman-Dutch law which continues to be the law of the land except in Jaffna which has a system of laws known as 'Tesavala.nai.'

The American Christian missionaries,

the first two graduates to be entered on the degree rolls of the new university were graduates of the American Mission Seminary of Jaffna. The Tamils of Jaffna took full advantage of the educational facilities offered to them and



BOYS' SCHOOL, KARATIVU, BATTICALOA

many sons of Jaffna held high posts in South India in those early days. One of them Mr. S. Chellappa Pillai, retired Chief Justice of Travancore, will be remembered as one of the leaders, who welcomed Swami Vivekananda to Jaffna.

English education which opened the portals to Government service was in the early days exclusively in the hands of the Christian missionaries. Later on Buddhists and Hindus secured Government aid for their schools as well. The State also organized its own schools and the Colombo Academy under Government management was affiliated to the Calcutta University. Some of the Christian colleges in Jaffna also got themselves affiliated to the same university. The American Mission Seminary, which was a first

bridge Senior Local and the external examinations of the London University were introduced into the Island. Young men taking university degrees and entering the professions had to study Latin, Greek and French, European History and Philosophy. To take higher degrees and to enter the Civil Service, they had to go to England and a class of educated men arose who knew little or nothing of their own culture, but were well acquainted with Western culture and institutions. In spite of the fact that there was relig-



BOYS' TAMIL SCHOOL, TRINCOMALEE

grade college, came to be known as the Jaffna College. The earlier Christian missionaries, it should be said to their credit, encouraged the indigenous languages, themselves contributing to the development of Sinhalese and Tamil literatures.

After Lord Curzon's Act of defining the territorial limits of Indian universities, the Calcutta University was forced to disaffiliate the Ceylon colleges and higher education in the Island had to turn westwards for patronage and recognition. Consequently, the Cam-

ious neutrality, the cultural domination of the West made Ceylon drift away from India. The Indians, who went to Ceylon, went there mostly as labourers in the coffee and tea estates opened by European planters or as petty traders or money-lenders.

It was into a Ceylon that was fast losing its old moorings that Swami Vivekananda, the apostle of a renaissance Hinduism made his entry. Let us yield to the temptation of quoting a few passages from the *Life of Swami Vivekananda*. 'The home-coming of

the Swami Vivekananda may be regarded as a great event in the history of modern India, for a united India rose to do him honour. Looming as he did upon the national horizon as the Arch-Apostle of the Hinduism of his age, and regarded as the Prophet of a re-interpreted Hinduism, an "Aggressive Hinduism," new in statement, and new in courageous consciousness,—the Swami Vivekananda was the Man of the Hour and the Harbinger of a new era. It is no wonder, therefore, that his coming was awaited eagerly by millions of his fellow-countrymen.' After four years of strenuous preaching work in the West the Swami was returning to his homeland in January 1897, in the steamer *Prinz Regent Luitpold*. 'In the early morning of January 15, the coast of Ceylon could be seen in the distance. It was a beautiful sight in the roseate hues of the rising sun. Gradually the harbour of Colombo with its majestic Cocoa Palms and its yellow-sanded beach came to view. This was India, and the Swami was beside himself with excitement. But he was totally unaware that he was going to meet representatives of all religious sects and social bodies who had come to welcome him home.' 'No words can describe the feelings of the vast masses and their expressions of love, when they saw the steam launch bearing the sage, steaming towards the jetty. The din and clamour of shouts and hand-clapping drowned even the noise of the breaking waves. The Hon. Mr. P. Coomaraswamy stepped forward, followed by his brother, and received the Swami garlanding him with a beautiful jasmine wreath.' The Swami delivered two addresses in Colombo and then left for Kandy. Travelling by coach to Matala and Dambulla he reached Anuradhapura, where 'under the shade of the

sacred Bo-tree the Swami gave a short address, to a crowd of two to three thousand people, interpreters translating, as he proceeded, into Tamil and Sinhalese.' 'From Anuradhapura to Jaffna is a distance of one hundred and twenty miles, and as the roads and the horses were equally bad, the journey was troublesome, saved from tediousness only by the exceeding beauty of the surroundings.' 'Twelve miles from the town of Jaffna, the Swami was met by many of the leading Hindu citizens, and a procession of carriages accompanied him for the remainder of the distance. Every street in the town, nay, every house was decorated in his honour. The scene, in the evening, when the Swami was driven in a torch-light procession to a large pandal erected at the Hindu College, was most impressive.' 'With his address at the Hindu College at Jaffna, the Swami's journey across Ceylon came to a close. So great was the impression created even by this brief visit that urgent requests were made to him at every place to send teachers of the Order to preach the gospel of Sri Ramakrishna in the Island.'

Writing from Almora on the 30th of June 1897, to Mr. T. Sokkanathan, Swami Vivekananda introduced Swami Shivananda, the first apostle of the Ramakrishna Mission to Ceylon, in the following words: 'My dear friend—The bearer of this note, Swami Shivananda, is sent to Ceylon as promised by me during my sojourn. He is quite fit for the work entrusted to his care, of course, with your kind help. I hope you will introduce him to other Ceylon friends. Yours ever in the Lord—Vivekananda.' Swami Shivananda stayed in Colombo for over six months; Hindus, Christians and Buddhists came under his influence. Although the stay was short, the influence exerted

was very wide and lasting. In 1929, that is thirty-two years later, when a Bill for incorporating the Ramakrishna Mission (Ceylon Branch) was in the process of enactment, one of the Swamis of the Order who happened to be in the lobby was accosted by a Sinhalese Christian Councillor with the words: 'Well, Swami! I am a Gurubhûi of yours, for I sat at the feet of Swami Shivananda and studied the Bhagavad-Gita.'

The heaven began to spread and take effect and in June 1902, a few days

which the Mission stood. As a result of the visit, enthusiasm was re-awakened and Young Men's Hindu Associations were started all over the Island. Visits were repeated in 1919, 1921 and 1924. During the last-mentioned visit, which was made on the invitation of the Hindu public of Trincomalie, the President of the Madras Mission consented to post a permanent monastic worker to stay in Trincomalie and organize the Mission work in Ceylon. As the years rolled by, other monastic workers arrived, friends and sympathizers continued to render



VIVEKANANDA HALL, BATTICALOA

before the passing away of the Swami Vivekananda, some devotees organized the Colombo Vivekananda Society with a view to congregate regularly and study the message of the great Swami. The Society has continued to uphold the highest traditions of Hindu culture and is the meeting place for people of all sects interested in India and Hinduism. It was the Colombo Vivekananda Society which in the latter part of 1916 invited the President of the Ramakrishna Mission of Madras to visit Ceylon and rekindle the interest in the ideals for

their assistance and for the last sixteen years the activities of the Ceylon Branch have been marked by a steady progress. We shall chronicle the important events during the period and shall also try to make a few observations regarding the spirit in which the work is carried on.

The organized work of the Mission in Ceylon had to begin in a manner differing in certain respects from that obtaining elsewhere. The opening of schools, their successful management and the training of a generation of youths, who, while adopting the material

standards of the West, still retained their loyalty to their own ancient culture, was in the main the programme before the monastic workers in Ceylon. From December 1924 to April 1925, the monastic worker who was posted for the Ceylon work toured extensively over various parts of the Island, lecturing and arousing interest and in May 1925, arranged to stay permanently in Trincomalie accepting the management of an Elementary English School and a Tamil School started by the local Hindus some years ago. In the succeeding month, he accepted the management of the Karativu, Anaipanthi, Mandur and Araippattai schools, all mixed Tamil Schools in the Batticaloa District. These were conducted for a number of years by the local Vivekananda Society. The development of these schools and the opening of other schools were the first items of work to which the Mission worker addressed himself. In the latter part of 1925 (to be more precise, on the 23rd of October, 6th of November and 30th of November, foundation-stones were laid for the Sri Sarada Girls' School of Karativu, the Shivananda Vidyalaya English School of Kalladiuppodai, Batticaloa and the new building of the Trincomalie English School, which it was proposed to develop into a High School.

An Elementary English School and a Tamil School situated in Varnnarponnai, Jaffna, donated to the President of the Madras Mission in 1917 and managed on his behalf by a local committee were also taken over with some liabilities, on the 15th of February, 1926. On the 25th of October of the same year the monastic worker of the Mission accepted the donation of a partially completed building in Batticaloa town, known as the Vivekananda Hall. In the latter part of 1928, the new building of the Trincomalie English School was opened by Sir Herbert

Stanley, Governor of Ceylon. By this time the permanent assets of the Mission in Ceylon in the shape of land and buildings had gone up to about fifty thousand rupees and the necessity arose for giving a legal status to the Mission in Ceylon. A Bill was prepared for incorporating the Ramakrishna Mission on lines similar to other incorporated societies doing religious and educational work in the Island. The Bill was passed by the Ceylon Legislative Council, received the assent of His Excellency the Governor and became law on the 4th of July 1929; it is known as Ordinance No. 8 of 1929.

In 1928 the Director of Education raised the status of the Trincomalie English School to that of a High School, enabling it to present students for the Cambridge Senior and London Matriculation examinations. Schools of this class are known in Ceylon as Senior Secondary English Schools. There are also Senior and Junior Secondary Tamil and Sinhalese Schools which prepare students for the local Senior Certificate (Sinhalese or Tamil) examinations, which entitle the holder to be trained as a teacher in Sinhalese and Tamil Schools. After the first four years of school life, the pupil has to decide definitely and follow either the English course or the course in the mother tongue. All pupils in the English Schools (of which there are about three hundred in the Island) have to devote a period a day for the mother tongue, and pupils in the Sinhalese or Tamil Senior and Junior Secondary Schools have a period of English, attendance at which is optional. In point of building, equipment and efficiency of teaching the Sinhalese and Tamil Schools in Ceylon compare very favourably with the English Schools. Education is compulsory up to the age of fourteen for boys and twelve for girls and the State

also provides free noon-meals for pupils in Sinhalese and Tamil Schools.

Now to resume our account of the Mission's educational activities, in May 1929, the Shivananda Vidyalaya English School was opened. The donors, the heirs of two leading citizens of the locality, donated also the Kalladiuppodai Tamil School, the Murakkattanchenai Tamil School, and land for the future development of the Shivananda Vidyalaya. The Students' Home started in Jaffna was transferred to Batticaloa to be attached to the Shivananda Vidyalaya.

In January 1931, the Colombo Ashrama was started in a rented building, regular worship of the precious relics of the Master kindly granted by the Headquarters of the Mission was arranged for, and classes and lectures were regularly held for the dissemination of the message. In 1933 one more building, known as the 'Sampanthar Memorial Hall' was added to the Trincomalee English School. In December 1933, and in January 1934, the Ceylon work received a fresh spiritual impetus by the visit of Swami Vijnanananda, a direct disciple of the Master. He visited Colombo, Batticaloa, Trincomalee and Anuradhapura, and blessed the work of the various centres.

As a direct result of his visit the Colombo Ashrama got its permanent building and the Batticaloa centre a shrine and several other buildings. On the 6th March 1935, the foundation-stone for the Colombo Ashrama building was laid and the building was opened on the 24th of February 1936. On the 26th of April 1936, the Jerbai Memorial Hall attached to the Colombo Ashrama building was opened. The Birth-Centenary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Deva was celebrated all over the Island. To quote from the report published by the Board of Management, 'At Batticaloa the im-

portant item in the programme of the Centenary Celebrations was the opening of the Anaipanthi Girls' School, the Kalmunai Tamil School, the Karativu Girls' Orphanage, the Science Laboratory and class-rooms of the Shivananda Vidyalaya and the new building of the Karativu Boys' school. Sir Waitilingam Duraiswamy (Speaker, Ceylon State Council) performed the opening ceremony of the Anaipanthi Girls' School and the Karativu Girls' Orphanage, Mr. M. Prasad, C.C.S., Government Agent, Eastern Province, opened the new buildings of the Karativu Boys' School, Mr. P. Vaithialingam, District Judge, Batticaloa, opened the Kalmunai Tamil School, and Mr. K. Vaithianathan, C. C. S., opened the Science Laboratory and the class-rooms of the Shivananda Vidyalaya.' A new Tamil School at Kokoddicholai was also added during the year.

On the 4th of January 1938, the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Temple and Prayer Hall were opened. During the year a power-plant was installed in the Shivananda Vidyalaya to provide light for the school and hostel buildings, and one new school, the Kokkuvil Ramakrishna Shaiva Vidyashalai of Jaffna, was added. In the early part of 1939, the Nagalinga Vidyalaya in Lunngala, near Badulla in the planting district, was added and in the latter part of the year the Colombo Ashrama received a donation of sixty perches of land for a Library and Reading Room, the donor also kindly promising to erect a suitable building for the purpose. In 1940 a Night School in Point Pedro, Jaffna, was added. In May 1940, the General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission visited all the centres in Ceylon and was accorded rousing receptions everywhere and a Civic Address at Batticaloa. This fact shows that the Mission is now recognized by all classes

of people as a permanent institution working for social and spiritual welfare.

The lands, buildings and other permanent effects held by the Mission in Ceylon is worth about one lakh and forty thousand rupees. 8,279 pupils study in the eighteen schools managed by the Mission, which together with the two orphanages receive a Government grant of over fifty thousand rupees per year. The war has brought about a temporary lull in the opening of new schools. The University of Ceylon for which the Government has been taking steps for several years is also held in abeyance. With the return of normal conditions,

the Mission is sure to be called upon to assume additional responsibilities both in its religious and educational work. We shall close this necessarily brief account of the activities of the Mission in Ceylon, with one point which we all cherish with pride in connection with all works carried on under the fostering care of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsadeva and that is the universal appeal of the Mission institutions. The Centenary Temple attached to the Colombo Ashrama opens its doors to all without difference of caste, creed or nationality and the same is also true of the Mission's educational institutions.

MUSIC IN ITS SOCIAL SETTING

BY N. C. МЕНТА, I.C.S.

[The Cultural Renaissance of Music in India is manifesting itself in various directions. In the North as well as in the South there is a new and intelligent interest in Music. Artists have also greater opportunities for the comparing of notes. Mr. Mehta's paper will be read with interest not only by those who are pursuing Music as their special study, but also by all who are interested in contemporary culture and thought.—Ed.]

Bhatkhande is the one man who has done so much for the re-awakening of the interest of Indian music and its proper development through its organization in educational institutions. I vividly recall the few minutes I was in company of this great man. There were Ustads—great in their own respective spheres—listening with rapt attention to this ascetic-looking individual, slightly deaf of hearing. It was the question of the reproduction of some of the Shrutis which Bhatkhande was trying to make clear by vocal demonstration. It was the triumph of true and disinterested scholarship over traditional knowledge and technical proficiency, and I should imagine that nobody would now dispute the claim that the great interest in Indian music that we witness to-day throughout Northern India is largely the

result of the labours of Bhatkhande. In these provinces in particular Bhatkhande's efforts have borne a rich harvest. His talented disciple Ratanjankar, the present Principal of the Marris College of Music, has trained up batches of accomplished musicians who have been spreading far and wide the gospel of this great and noble heritage of our country. With but slender resources and despite overwhelming difficulties, this premier Music College has rendered great services, and, what is more important, has managed to collect a nucleus of able teachers who have patiently tried to impart a modicum of knowledge of our music to boys and girls, most of whom could only take it up as a part-time study. Time has not yet come when music could be recognized and introduced as a regular

course of study in our educational institutions, but that it will come can admit of no doubt. We have recently taken an important and far-reaching step by relating our education to basic handicrafts, and it is only a question of time when it will be recognized that true education must also be related to the training of the eye and the ear and that the arts of music, modelling, painting and of dance are as much an integral part and life of the educational curriculum as the imparting of knowledge in other subjects.

In the meantime music has made great strides especially as compared to other arts such as sculpture, painting and dancing, during recent years throughout the country and, in particular, in our own provinces, and this progress has been greatly stimulated by the fundamental changes introduced in our life by the advent of talkies and radio music. A new career of dazzling prizes and India-wide publicity has been opened up as a result of these fundamental changes in the sphere of popular entertainment. People certainly have had a spirit of comparing their own musical heritage with that of others, of adopting a critical attitude in respect of their intrinsic merits and also of making their voice partially heard as to their own requirements, and likes and dislikes. The amateur has incidentally come into his own—the mere entertainer as against the professional. In other words, music has ceased to be merely the pastime of the few—of the connoisseur or the rich. Music is now broadcast from elaborate State organizations and the great democracy has acquired a right to be heard in the matter of its musical programmes. In other words, our music is undergoing a radical process of re-orientation.

Not very long ago music was on its technical side merely the monopoly

of a select coterie of traditional artists who displayed their accomplishment before their rich patrons who were probably more ignorant and even less discriminating than the unsophisticated people in our villages. It was an art which was languishing for want of enlightenment and support—an art which had a past but hardly a future. So far as the music of the masses was concerned, it remained practically unchanged. The ordinary educated classes could hardly hope either to have the necessary time or the training to acquire even a modicum of proficiency of the experts, and with the loss of patronage and the absence of facilities for education for the educated classes even the standards of appreciation were rapidly declining. Things have, however, changed as a result of the causes I have referred to above. Apart from a well organized institution, such as the College of Music in Lucknow, the principal cities, such as Cawnpore and Allahabad, promptly took up the organization of musical education and have achieved some notable results. Annual conferences such as these have now developed into well organized functions for the display of professional and amateur talents in the sphere of dance and music from all parts of the country. Merely theoretical discussions and learned discourses have been rightly relegated to the background, for in music what matters primarily is the operative part of it. Recently another great institution has come into being in these provinces which bids fare to become an organization of far-reaching importance not only to these provinces but to the country at large. I refer to the Uday Shankar Centre of Indian Culture at Almora. Amidst a scene of great natural beauty has been set up a unique Centre where artists of the highest accomplishments from all parts of India—musicians and

dancers—have collected to revive the glories of this noble heritage of ours, and it is but proper that this great academy of learning has already begun to attract students from all parts of India and even from countries beyond its borders. Artists of international fame have given up the footlights of publicity and eschewed the intoxications of popular applause to work in quiet and train up bands of students who will take the torch of this great spiritualizing culture far and wide in the country and make music and dance and their appreciation an integral part of our cultural life. I was particularly glad that this great institution came into being on the basis of the fundamental factor of our culture, namely, disinterested service and sacrifice. With us arts have not been something alien to or apart from our daily life. They have been, in fact, an integral part and the very stuff of our being. If it is largely true of painting and sculpture which flourished and grew with the growth of our spiritual stature it is almost entirely true of music. It is not an accident or merely a fact of primitive civilization that our music dates from the Vedas and that the earliest musical production should be one of the four of the sacred Vedas. Nothing is more astonishing in this country of ours as the singular unity and persistence of tradition throughout these long centuries of our cultural life. The role of music in our daily ceremonies and on important festive occasions dates from an ancient past when even the present Indian languages had not yet come into existence. It is curious that the place of music became even more important with the course of time, and almost from the very beginnings of our modern languages music and literature came to be associated even more intimately than ever before. The bulk of the classical Sanskrit poetry, while

it was recited, remained essentially separate from music; and though it is said that this poetry used to be set to music on special occasions, it must have been in a remote past. It is, however, remarkable that almost from the very start the writers of our Indian languages made use of Ragas and Raginis in connection with their literary compositions, and it is astonishing that the great works like the *Soor Sagar* or the *Vinaya Patrika* of Tulasidas or the beautiful poems of Chandidas and Vidyapati, Mirabai and the great Vaishnava saints should have been composed in definite Ragas and Raginis. These poets were, therefore, singers as well, and I do not think that either India or any other country witnessed such an extraordinary combination of literary and musical capacity as in these earlier days of our Indian languages, especially Hindi. The mere statement of this fact immediately gives rise to certain reflections. It was obvious that such musical compositions could have only been possible with the writers who combined the literary artistry with exceptional knowledge of music, and were in a position to address an audience who naturally and instinctively responded to their creations. Mirabai, Vidyapati, Tulasidas and Soordas could never have written these superb songs or hymns, if you like it, except for an audience which understood and intuitively comprehended the *leit-motiv* of their compositions. In other words, music and poetry were a matter of common culture—a truly democratic culture developed by the people and for the people; and that is perhaps the reason why even to this day Mirabai, Tulasidas and Soordas continue to be sung throughout the land. I am never tired of repeating that these songs were not merely literary effusions—graceful compositions written to impress or to influence a select coterie of

people; they were the expressions of a spiritual enlightenment and inner radiance which continue to shine because they were true and disinterested prayers, or, if you like it, efforts of the human mind. Compare these great compositions with an elaborately finished literary composition like Jayadeva's *Gita-Govinda* of the tenth century A.D. Despite the theme of Radha and Krishna and the superlative music of the words, Jayadeva's beautiful lyrics could never compare with the songs of Mirabai, Tulasidas or Soordas; for the former lacked the sincerity and the burning passion of the great quest in which these great Vaishnava singers were engaged.

You would remember that according to our traditional prescriptions each of our Ragas and Raginis have their appropriate deities. When and how this association came into existence is unknown, and is perhaps a matter of but little importance. The very fact of association is, however, intriguing and interesting, for it only exemplifies the ever recurring emphasis on doing everything merely as an offering to the Divine. This may be an old-fashioned idea, particularly in these days of storm and strife, and yet it seems to me that the reiteration of this idea is, perhaps, more important now than ever before. Dance and music are arts which, if not inspired by the spiritual motive, are apt to deteriorate as mere sensuous activities, which would have for their objects nothing but temporary pleasure. It is only the ethical and the spiritual content which raises the cultivation of dance and music to a higher plane of living and, in fact, constitutes it as a step to spiritual awakening or realization.

In this connection I would like to quote an extract from a speech made by Lord Stamp—*the famous economist, statistician and business man*—in 1937 :—

'But lastly, in this particular age, I must stress the prevalent neglect of the awareness of spiritual values—the greatest awareness of all, so easily neglected, smothered, so little trusted, yet so vital an element in all purposive thought and action. It can be vouchsafed to men in a hundred different ways, but they all need some window *open* in the soul by which they can enter. We can only get certain rays by putting ourselves in the way of them. The practice of private devotion and reading, or of public worship with the best moments of the best spirits of the ages beating through to us in prayer and music and song, is one way of putting ourselves in the way of them. You have no use for them? Well, there is very good scientific evidence that something grand lies there, something that works when all else fails. Be not like your intelligent dog before a sunset or a sonnet. For the grandeur in anything for us is limited to the grandeur in *ourselves* by which we apprehend it.' It is indeed fortunate that the central conception of Indian art—dedication to the divine—continues to be in the very forefront of the activities of some of our major institutions which impart training in aesthetics. I only have to name institutions such as Shantiniketan, the Culture Centre at Almora, the Kerala Mandiram in the South. The mention of Shantiniketan immediately recalls the name of the Guru Dev—Rabindranath Tagore, who has perhaps been more responsible than any single individual in recent times for marrying beautiful language with lovely music in exquisite hymns to the Divine. His offerings of songs were truly in the old tradition, and it was but appropriate that this message of ancient India in its modern garb immediately took the world by storm. In this connection I would like to say a few words about the necessity of bringing music to the very

doors of the people. Scholarship and accomplishment will fail of their purpose if they move in a sphere of their own, remote from the activities of the multitudes and become merely the pastime of a few. I believe we are passing through a revaluation of the fundamental conceptions of life. Our activities have to be judged more from a social rather than individual standpoint; and it is for this reason that the Ustads—the masters—must find inspiration from and infuse poetry to the commonplaces of life. Our old classical system of Dhrupad produced a unique combination whereby the word 'music' and the deepest instincts of worship were combined in a singular harmony. Unfortunately, however, spiritual strength which is at the root of the real and lasting power of the people is the least concrete and is apt to be also the least noticed. The decline therefore of Dhrupad was almost co-existent with the decline in the spiritual fibre of the people. It also marked the divorce between poetry and music—the fundamental basis of our classical system of music. We are again going back and it is fortunate that in this new revival we have not ignored the popular rhythm—the 'Deshi' music, which was even recognized by the classical writers of the past. Popular melodies enshrine a living culture and constitute a vital channel of popular appeal and communication. This music of the people cannot be ignored by the high-brows except at their own peril, for it is the living stratum in which culture and its ideals must take root if they are to grow to their full stature. There is a further aspect of this folk-art which expresses itself so nobly and so vividly in unpremeditated dance and music of our simple village folk that it deals with all the changing moods of the village side—with its light and shade, with its gaiety and tragedy, with its mundane

needs and instinctive piety. It is therefore fortunate for us that with the revival of music has come deeper understanding and closer study of our folk-songs, for these songs constitute our real Sangita.

I was glad to read in yesterday's papers the remarks of Mr. Powell-Price about one of the village schools that he recently inspected. He said:

'My picture of a village school is that it should be cheap and open to the air of the heavens with protection from the rains of the heaven. And there was no reason why every village school should not be in a grove of trees with only that amount of roof necessary to give protection from the weather. If we have a promise of great things for India and if we carry on, we will be able to regenerate the villages of India.'

He further said that music and dancing did not require money, and basic education was trying to fill the life of the boys and girls in the village school with healthy ideas.

I agree that village schools may again become places of inspiration when the arts of the country—visual, mimetic, musical—are treated as an important part of the educational curriculum. It is only in this way that even the poverty of India may be exalted into something beautiful, and that places which are merely constructions of drab, brick and mortar will again be the meeting places of laughing children, happy in the rhythmic expression of their innocent joys and frolics. Homes which are only reminiscent of the decay of human energy and the helplessness of the individual to rise above his surroundings, may yet sparkle once again with a new pride and discipline which are conspicuously absent at present. In all this awakening, however, it should not be forgotten that discipline is the condition

precedent of all progress of arts—especially music; that more important than mere technical skill is the right understanding of the noble art itself. In fact, mere accomplishment may be a snare—a fatal step—to further deterioration as has happened in the not too distant past. The sensuous beauty of music or dance or of both must be impressed for the glory of God if it is to yield its proper meaning or to justify its existence. The choice of the theme or of the words is, therefore, just as important as the medium or the technique through which it is expressed. And what could be more ennobling, more enthralling than to sing or to dance for the glory of God? We, therefore, begin with a prayer and also end with a prayer—such is the path laid down for us by the ancients and a

nobler one has still to be discovered. The Lord Himself said that 'He resides neither in the heavens nor in the minds of the Yogis; He is where His devotees are, occupied in singing His pæans.' Gita has enjoined on us to work with a mind that is in poise, and this is truer of music than of anything else; for through it we transcend the common-places of life and get to a closer glimpse of the ultimate Reality than is otherwise possible. Let us, therefore, go ahead, cultivate these noble arts, always remembering that these are not for mere pleasure—pleasure of the senses which are necessarily evanescent—but for the great Quest through which we shall derive strength and inspiration, joy and vigour to restore the clamant problems and conflicts of the modern world.

PHILOSOPHY IN MODERN INDIA

BY KUMAR PAL, M.A.

Modernism is one of the plentiful fads which provide fit food for a large number of human beings engaged in various pursuits. Modern age is said to have its beginnings in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, which were characterized by a re-awakening technically known as the Renaissance. This was a momentous landmark in the history of humanity and had repercussions all the world over in all fields of life.

This revival of learning delivered Europe from the shackles of medieval scholasticism. The most outstanding and fundamental feature of the modern era was a new faith in man. Human genius and potentialities were set at liberty. Curiosity coupled with courage and hope led to marvellous

achievements. But if we observe closely we can find that this onward urge has resulted in different discordant developments.

On the one hand it has brought us to the panorama of modern sciences. Two new worlds were discovered and the map of the whole globe has been changed. Industrialism revolutionized the structure of society. The standards of living arose to an enormous height. Comforts and luxuries increased. The duration of average life is prolonged. Numerous heretofore unknown and untrodden aspects of life have been laid bare. Science is thus trying to usher in 'the kingdom of heaven upon the earth.'

But on the other hand this very faith in man strengthened by the con-

trol over nature secured by science, supported by the increased amount of intelligence and knowledge and equipped with the incalculable products of its application has brought mankind on the verge of destruction. It is intensifying that hatred and discord in family, farm, factory, school, college, court, office, transport, all professions whatsoever and international relations which necessarily explode from time to time in vast wars. 'It has brought about the prostitution of science to the service of the sword and the purse.'

Unfortunately, however, for India the modern era meant quite a different thing, although it faithfully reproduced the tragic part of the play. Discord is abroad to-day. Conflicts are raising their heads all around. The political atmosphere is surcharged with suspicion and all sorts of controversial wranglings. Even in the sphere of thought one school is set fluminating against another. In this bewildering chaos even the part is opposed to the whole. Each person is mad after 'liberty of opinion and originality of thinking.' The new generation takes delight in flouting the dictates of authority.

Yet, on the other hand, Indians formed no party to the adventurous voyages on the wide ocean to the new worlds or to the poles. As for scientists India has hardly few to its credit. Inventions there have been none. Instead of conquests India fell an easy prey to utter subjection; instead of enterprising journeys India witnessed penitence and excommunication for the sins of crossing the sea and for touching an outsider. Instead of industrial progress we Indians revolted against the introduction of 'the huge black giants,' i.e., mills and engines. Instead of heralding the dawn of real critical philosophy, a spirit of indepen-

dent inquiry and liberation from the authoritarian Revelationism of the medieval schoolmen, the modern period brought the history of real Indian philosophy to an abrupt close with Madhusudan in the sixteenth century. Political philosophy is conspicuous by its very absence. We merely import principles from abroad. Instead of being delivered from the servile acquiescence in the past commentaries India was plunged all the more in the mire of slavery. Even the now renowned contemporary philosophers of India are mere fervent admirers, or interpreters, or comparers of the ancient philosophy of India or are the re-echoes of the great Western philosophers.

As a matter of fact, being one of the oldest cradles of civilization India's genius had reached its climax in the hoary past. But after the zenith came the decline which too began to show its symptoms in the remote antiquity and is now definitely coming to an end. New India is now only passing through the agonies of birth. For the last several millenniums Indians have been very submissive and devoid of all self-reliance. Even the greatest of our post-Buddhistic philosophers, while expounding their brand novel doctrines sought support in the old scriptures. For them it was a matter of great ingenuity and enjoyment if they found in the Vedas or Upanishads a verse here and another there, in support of their own principles. Their successors proved loyal and obedient pupils to the preceptors. If Shankara in his short life could write Bhashyas on the ten Upanishads, the Gita and the Brahma Sutras, his disciples merely added annotations (Vritti) to his commentaries but did not take up, save in a few cases, other Upanishads or Shastras for even independent commentation. In turn, their disciples too, faithfully

carried on the tradition and heaped explanations (Tikâ) and then notes (Tippani) upon the already voluminous and elaborate writings of their Gurus. The later Indian philosophers subordinated their own reason to the dictates of established authority. This was nothing short of intellectual bankruptcy.

And this tendency still persists in our leaders of philosophy. Many of them are mad after the search for some new, hitherto hidden and unknown obscure philosophical literature which may supply them the data for some thesis and thus bring them to the light of publicity. If they succeed to find out some new doctrine they go about lecturing their originality without being even fit and deserving students of the same. Others are a bit sober and reflective. They think over and over again and form certain notions. But they do not dare declare them unless they can get hold of some passages in the scriptures and commentaries to vindicate their truth, or if not, some such verses which may easily or in some far-fetched way, lend themselves to the straining of meaning in order to be cited in their support.

Still others, obsessed by some inferiority complex, as it were, have lost faith not only in themselves, but also in their great ancestors. They believe, as some Eur-Americans do, that philosophy in the true sense had its origin and growth only on the European soil. But being nationalists in pursuance of the fashion of the day these philosophers like to prove that our ancient philosophers also corroborate the principles enunciated by the great Western thinkers. They measure the truth or validity of our seers by showing that they say nothing different from what Kant, Hegel, Bradley or Bergson say.

On the other hand, the laymen have

followed suit in their line. They expected a sound guidance from the learned Pandits. But their hopes were shattered. The Pandits remained mere custodians of the ancient lore. Yet the ordinary Indian was firm in his fidelity until only a few decades ago. Without himself being able to cope with the involved, obsolete, obscure Sanskrit literature he accepted what the Pandits declared as enjoined by the sacred books. Even the most harmful social measures were sponsored by such texts. Later on quotations and references were given up. Mere citation of some Sanskrit verse sufficed to carry conviction. For a long time Indian scholarship continued to tread upon the path of reaction under these purblind leaders of the blind.

Then a flood of new light came from the West. It was met with vehement opposition in its initial stages. Gradually and imperceptibly it began to undermine the dam. The ranks of dogmatic orthodoxy gave way. The loyalty to the outworn scripturology was divided. Though a considerable number still adheres to the timeworn tradition, yet there has been a positive swing of the pendulum to the other side. A big section of the Indian populace has transferred its faith. Yet loyal they remain even to-day. Formerly they were swayed by the authority of the old, now they are slaves of the new. Any spontaneous and senseless statement which an ordinary man in the street of London or Oxford may have blustered forth without giving any forethought to it is accepted as an infallible decree of God and is regarded by leading Indians as worthy of citing on the platforms and in the press. The time-tested truths revealed by our ancient seers are considered fiction, myth, fable, allegory or exaggeration.

Even the concept of Indian philosophy

has suffered distortion in this swing to the other extreme. Philosophy in the West is regarded as quite impractical, bereft of all touch with our day-to-day life, and having nothing to do with the grave empirical problems which stare us in the face. It is taken as a play of imagination. Its sole purpose is to satisfy our intellectual curiosity and remove the doubts we entertain concerning the practical nonentities of Being or non-Being. Prominent Indian philosophy-mongers are now vying with one another in proving that we too have a philosophy of the Western type. They are sparing no pains to establish that Indian philosophy is divested of all practical bearing and mystical touch. For this purpose they have artificially segregated the six Hindu Darshanas along with the Buddhistic and Jain systems and are endeavouring to show that they constitute the whole of Indian philosophy.

This view is entirely misleading. Some of our philosophy professors are beginning to realize this mistake. Indian philosophy is not mere theory or intellectual verbosity. 'It is eminently intellectual, emotional and devotional and actively humanitarian.' (Dr.

Bhagavan Das : *Science of the Self* p. 28). 'To the Indian mind philosophy is essentially practical' (Radhakrishman : *Contemporary Indian Philosophy* p. 257).

What is at present considered to be the whole is really a little more than one-third of Indian philosophy. The above-mentioned systems undertake to study only the intellectual (cognitive) aspect of man. In a complete survey of Indian philosophy we cannot leave out of our purview the equally important Dharma-Sutras and the Bhakti-Sutras besides a host of literature dealing with the actional and emotional sides of men respectively. Even in the six Darshanas we come across the emotional and practical disciplines prescribed by Patanjali and numerous injunctions of the Purva-Mimamsa which seek to direct and regulate human life. The Upanishads also contain passages about Upâsanâs and moral restraints.

In fact in India we have nothing like 'philosophy' (love of wisdom) pure and simple. Therefore we must bear in mind that in talking of 'Indian philosophy,' by which is generally meant ancient Indian philosophy, we should never confine our attention to the six or odd systems alone.

SWAMI TURIYANANDA

BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

[The disciples of Sri Ramakrishna are the legacy of the Master to India and the world. The last of them passed away about one year ago. The time has now come for presenting to the thinking world a study of the lives of the monastic disciples and the chief lay disciples of the Master. We are glad to note that Swami Pavitrananda, the President of the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, has undertaken this great task.—Ed.]

Each disciple of Sri Ramakrishna was great in his own way. Each had superb qualities which would dazzle those who would witness them. Swami Turiyananda was a blazing fire of renunciation. To be near him was to feel the warmth of his highly developed spiritual personality. From the very boyhood till the end, his life was a great fight: in the beginning it was a fight for his own spiritual evolution; during the later days to make those who came within the orbit of his influence better. He was as if ceaselessly alert and vigilant, so that everything in and around him might be the expression of the highest spirituality. Yet it meant no struggle to him. It became so very natural with him. His early life was modelled on the teachings of Shankaracharya, and those who witnessed him in later days could see in him a living example of a Jivanmukta. Swami Vivekananda once said to his American disciples, 'In me you have seen the expression of Kshatriya power, I am going to send you one who is the embodiment of Brahminical qualities, one who represents what a Brahmin or the highly spiritually evolved man is.' And he sent Swami Turiyananda.

Swami Turiyananda was born in a Brahmin family in north Calcutta on the 3rd of January 1863—i.e. the same year as Swami Vivekananda was born in central Calcutta. His family name was Harinath Chattopadhyaya. He lost his parents while very young, and was brought up by his elder brother. He

could not prosecute his studies beyond the Entrance class, as his interest lay in some other direction. He was born with good Samskaras, and he made full use of them. From his very young age he lived the life of an orthodox Brahma-charin—bathing three times a day, cooking his own meal, and reciting the whole of the Gita before the day broke. He was a deep student of the Gita, the Upanishads, and the works of Shankaracharya. His mind was bent towards the Advaita Vedanta, and he strove sincerely to live up to that ideal. The story goes, one day while bathing in the Ganges, he saw a crocodile. His first reaction was to leave the water and come to the land for safety of life. At once the thought occurred to him, 'If I am one with Brahman, why should I fear? I am not a body. And if I am Spirit, what fear have I from anything in the whole world, much less from a crocodile?' This idea so much stirred his mind that he did not leave the spot. Bystanders thought he was foolishly courting death. But they did not know that he was testing his love for Advaita philosophy. The purpose of his life was to be a Jivanmukta. He himself once said that the first time he read the verse in which it is said that life is meant for the realization of Jivanmukti, he leaped in joy. For that was the ideal he was aiming at.

The scriptures say if a man is sincere, he meets with his spiritual guide unsought for. Harinath also met with

his Master unexpectedly and without knowing it. He was then a boy of thirteen or fourteen. He heard that a Paramahansa would come to a neighbouring house. Out of curiosity he went to see the Paramahansa. This Paramahansa was no other than Sri Ramakrishna, who afterwards played a great part in moulding his life. To give the version of Swami Turiyananda himself: 'A hackney carriage with two passengers in it stopped in front of the house. A thin emaciated man got down from the carriage supported by another man. He appeared to be totally unconscious of the world. When I got a better view of him, I saw that his face was surrounded with a halo. The thought immediately flashed in my mind, 'I have read about Shukadeva in the books. Is this then a man like him?' Supported by his attendant, he walked to the room with tottering gait. Regaining a little consciousness of the world he saw a large portrait of Kali on the wall and bowed his head before it. Then he sang a song depicting the oneness of Krishna and Kali which thrilled the audience.'

He met Sri Ramakrishna again at Dakshineswar two or three years afterwards. Soon he became passionately devoted to Sri Ramakrishna, and began to see him as often as he could. Sri Ramakrishna asked Harinath to come to him avoiding holidays, when there was a large assemblage of visitors. Thus Harinath found an opportunity to talk very freely and intimately with the Master. Sri Ramakrishna was startled to know from young Hari that his favourite book was the Rama-Gita, an Advaita treatise. In the course of conversation one day Harinath told Sri Ramakrishna that he found a great inspiration while he visited Dakshineswar, whereas in Calcutta he felt miserable. To this appealing statement of the young

disciple, Sri Ramakrishna said, 'Why, you are a servant of the Lord Hari, and His servant can never be unhappy anywhere.' 'But I don't know that I am His servant,' said the boy. The Master reiterated, 'Truth does not depend upon anybody's knowledge of it. Whether you know it or not, you are a servant of the Lord.' This reassured Harinath.

From an early age Harinath had an abhorrence of women. He did not allow even little girls to come near him. One day in answer to an inquiry from the Master on this subject, he said, 'Oh, I cannot bear them.' 'You talk like a fool!' said the Master reprovingly, 'Look down upon woman! What for? They are the manifestation of the Divine Mother. Bow down to them as to your mother and hold them in respect. That is the only way to escape their influence. The more you hate them, the more you fall into the snare.' These fiery words penetrated the heart of Harinath and changed his entire outlook on women.

One day Harinath asked the Master as to how one could completely get rid of the sex idea. Sri Ramakrishna replied that one needed not to think in that line. One should try to think of positive ideas, of God, then only one would be free from any sex idea. This was a new revelation to the young boy.

We have said Harinath was a deep student of Vedanta and tried to mould his life according to its teachings. One day the Master told Harinath, 'They say you are studying and meditating on Vedanta nowadays. It is good. But what does the Vedanta philosophy teach? Brahman alone is real and everything else is unreal—isn't that its substance or is there anything more? Then why don't you give up the unreal and cling to the Real?' These words threw a new light on Vedanta

and turned the thoughts of Harinath in a new direction.

A few days later Sri Ramakrishna went to Calcutta and sent for Harinath; when he came he found the Master in a state of semi-consciousness. 'It is not easy to see the world of phenomena as unreal,' the Master began addressing the assembled devotees. 'This knowledge is impossible without the special grace of God. Mere personal effort is powerless to confer this realization. A man is after all a tiny creature, with very limited powers. What an infinitesimal part of truth can he grasp by himself!' Harinath felt as if these words were directed to him, for he had been straining every nerve to attain illumination. The Master then sang a song eulogising the miraculous power of divine grace. Tears flowed down his cheeks, literally wetting the ground. Harinath was deeply moved. He too burst into tears. After that he learned to surrender himself at the feet of the Lord. Harinath felt an intense longing for liberation. He wanted very much to realize God in this very life. In his great pang for the realization of God, he would sometimes weep. One night he cried much on the bank of the Ganges at Dakshineswar. Just at that time Sri Ramakrishna was inquiring where he had gone. When Harinath returned, Sri Ramakrishna consoled him and said: 'The Lord is greatly pleased if one cries to Him. The tears of love wash away all mental impurities accumulated through ages. It is very good to cry to God.'

Another day he was meditating in the Panchavati grove at Dakshineswar. His concentration became very deep. Just then Sri Ramakrishna came towards him. As soon as Sri Ramakrishna looked at him, Harinath burst into tears. Sri Ramakrishna stood still. Harinath felt something creeping up

inside his bosom and was overcome by an irrepressible fit of shaking. Sri Ramakrishna remarked that this crying was not for nothing, it was a sort of ecstasy. Referring to this incident Swami Turiyananda once said: 'The awakening of the Kundalini was an easy matter for Sri Ramakrishna. He could do that even without touching, by merely standing near by.'

Sri Ramakrishna used to speak highly of his great spiritual potentialities. Speaking one day of this disciple's core of personality, Sri Ramakrishna remarked, 'He comes of that transcendent region whence name and form are manufactured!' Sri Ramakrishna loved Harinath dearly. Once the young man did not come to Dakshineswar for a number of days. When at last he came the Master said to him in a voice choked with emotion, 'Why don't you come here? I love to see you all, because I know that you are God's special favourites. Otherwise what can I expect from you? You have not the means to offer me a piece worth of presents, nor have you a tattered mat to spread on the floor when I go to your house. And still I love you so much. Don't fail to come here (meaning himself), for this is where you will receive everything. If you are sure to find God elsewhere, go there by all means. What I want is that you realize God, transcend the misery of the world and enjoy divine beatitude. Anyhow try to attain it in this life. But the Mother tells me that you will realize God without any effort if you only come here. So I insist upon your coming.' As he spoke thus he actually wept.

It is needless to say Harinath also had extraordinary veneration for the Master. In the later days when he was severely suffering from various physical ailments, once he remarked

that the bliss he got in the company of the Master more than compensated for the whole lifetime of misery.

After the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna when the monastery at Baranagore was established, Harinath joined it in 1899 while he was twenty-four years of age. Nothing need be told here about the days of austerity and Tapasya of these young monks at this first monastery of the Ramakrishna Order. The great fire of spirituality that was kindled at Dakshineswar by the Master, they kept alive at Baranagore, to be handed down to the world at large for the benefit of humanity.

The Sannyasin-like love for freedom made some of these young monks feel that they must not confine themselves to one place. They must go out in the wide world depending solely on God and gather spiritual experiences from the hardships and difficulties of life. Some went out on pilgrimages, some went out for Tapasya in deeper solitude. Swami Turiyananda also left the shelter of the Baranagore Math and for years travelled on foot from one holy city to another, practising the most rigorous Sadhanas. He had often scarcely the barest necessities about him—at times not even a blanket. The severe winter of Northern India he passed with a cotton Chaddar, and for his food he had what chance might bring. He travelled through the Central Provinces and stayed for some time at Rajpur, off Dehra Dun, and it was here that an astrologer told him he would soon meet one whom he most liked. In a day or two he, to his great surprise, met Swami Vivekananda, who was accompanied by some other Gurubhais. Swami Turiyananda joined the party and practised Tapasya at Hrishikesh, the famous retreat of Sadhus, a few miles above Hardwar. After Swami Vivekananda recovered from his severe

fever which he had here, he went to Meerut and Delhi to recoup his health, and Swami Turiyananda was also one of the party. Swami Turiyananda again met Swamiji at Bombay, at Mt. Abu, when the latter was about to depart for America in 1892. Swami Turiyananda used to say that from the radiant form of Swamiji he could at once judge that he had perfected himself in Sadhana and was ready to impart to mankind the results of his experience. At Abu Swamiji told Swami Turiyananda, 'Haribhai (Swamiji used to call him by this appellation), I don't know what I have gained by austerities and spiritual practices, but this I find that from the experience of travel throughout India my heart has expanded. I feel intensely for the poor, the afflicted, the distressed people of India. Let me see if I can do anything for them.'

Sometime during this period he visited the celebrated Himalayan shrines of Kedarnath and Badri Narayan and had stayed for a period at Srinagar (Garhwal) and Uttarkashi. Talking of the days in Garhwal the Swami once said, 'I was in a continuous exalted mood. My only idea was to realize Him. I not only committed to memory eight Upanishads, but used to be absorbed in the meaning of each Mantram.' He was a master of his senses and once he sat down to meditate, external troubles could not reach the inner sanctuary of his mind. He spoke of this later on to a Swami of the Ramakrishna Order, 'When I sit down for meditation I lock the entrances to my mind, and after that nothing external can reach there. When I unlock them, then only can the mind cognize things outside.' On another occasion to a young Sannyasin he remarked, 'Write in big characters on the doors of your mind, "No Admission"

—and no outside disturbance shall trouble you during meditation. . It is because you allow outside things to disturb you that they have access to your mind.' During this wandering life one day he had a very interesting experience. While he was travelling from place to place on foot, the thought began to torment him that whereas every one was doing something in this world, he was living only a useless, vagrant life. He could not shake off this thought however he was trying to do that. At last it became so oppressive to him that he threw himself down under a tree. There he fell asleep and had a dream. He saw himself lying on the ground and then he saw that his body began to expand in all directions. It went on expanding and expanding till it seemed to cover the whole world. Then it occurred to him: 'See how great you are, you are covering the whole world. Why do you think your life is useless? A grain of Truth will cover a whole world of delusion. Get up, be strong and realize the Truth. That is the greatest life.' He awoke and jumped up and all his doubts vanished.

In some parts of his travels in the United Provinces and the Punjab he was accompanied by Swami Brahmananda.

During this Parivrājaka life Swami Turiyananda heard of the phenomenal success of Swami Vivekananda in the Chicago Parliament of Religions, news of which reached the shores of India and vibrated from one end of the country to the other. At this time Swami Vivekananda was writing from America to his brother disciples to meet together and organize themselves into a band for the spread of the message of Sri Ramakrishna. At first Swami Turiyananda did not pay any heed to such an idea. His love for a life of Tapasya was too

great for him to think of anything else. At last a short while before the return of Swami Vivekananda to India, Swami Turiyananda along with Swami Brahmananda came back to the Ramakrishna Math, which was then transferred to Alambazar.

Swami Vivekananda gradually persuaded Swami Turiyananda to work. Swami Vivekananda had a great admiration for this brother disciple. In a letter from America Swami Vivekananda wrote in 1895, 'Whenever I think of the wonderful renunciation of Hari, about his steadiness of intellect and forbearance, I get a new access of strength!' Swami Turiyananda's love for Swami Vivekananda also was unique. He would be ready to sacrifice anything for one whom Sri Ramakrishna dubbed as the leader of the party.

At the Alambazar Math Swami Turiyananda took upon himself the training of the young recruits to the Order. He began to help them in meditation and teach them the scriptures like the Gita, the Upanishads, etc. He began to take public classes in north Calcutta. In 1900 when Swami Vivekananda started for America for the second time, he persuaded Swami Turiyananda to accompany him for the American work. Swami Turiyananda being a man of meditation was averse to the life of public preaching. So Swami Vivekananda found it hard, in the beginning, to persuade him to go to America. When all arguments failed, Swami Vivekananda, it is said, put forth his arms round his Gurubhai's neck and actually wept like a child as he uttered these words: 'Dear Haribhai, can't you see I have been laying down my life, inch by inch, in fulfilling this mission of my Master, till I am on the verge of death! Can you merely look on and not come to

my help by relieving me of a part of my great burden?' Swami Turiyananda was overpowered and all his hesitation gave way to the love he bore

for the leader. Swami Turiyananda agreed to go to the West however much he disliked it as a land steeped in luxury and materialism.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

FREEDOM IN EDUCATION

During the Dark Ages in Europe, the Church found it necessary to chain the minds of its sons and daughters, with the kindest of intentions and with the ostensible purpose of effecting the salvation of their souls. The common herd acquiesced, as a matter of course. For, the act of thinking is rather a tough job and what could be easier than to leave your thinking to a proxy who promises you peace on earth and peace ever afterwards. This state of affairs continued for a pretty long period; the enlightened Church, which had a monopoly of all learning, continued to grow more and more powerful and the enchained masses were getting more and more enfeebled as the years rolled on. But one thing should be said to the credit of the Medieval Christian Church: it opened its doors wide and admitted even the poorest peasant born in obscurity to the ranks of the clergy and if he manifested intelligence and virtue, he had the opportunity of rising higher and higher and becoming a Prince of the Church and may even eventually become the Pope, the ruler of Christendom and thereby occupy a position higher than that of any hereditary monarch.

'Knowledge is Power,' and it is no wonder that the Church with its monopoly of knowledge held also all the power. Kings trembled before the bishops and the Christian world, in a way, passed through that Golden Age that preceded

that evil day when our first parents ate of 'the Fruit of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal taste brought Death into the World, and all our woe, with loss of Eden.' The tree of knowledge of good and evil was as attractive as ever and the Tempter, probably in the shape of a reprobate priest such as Luther, plucked the fruit and gave unto the common man to eat of it. Not only were the man's eyes opened, but also his chains snapped away. Secular learning grew and men found fresher and fresher delights in the old Latin and Greek classics. Emancipated man naturally began to suspect the intentions of Mother Church and began to question those very things which the Church wanted him to accept unquestioningly for the sake of saving his soul. The Greek and Roman philosophers appealed to him more and the pagan gods with their muscle and blood and intensely human passions were not unworthy objects of admiration. It is interesting to note that the reaction started in the Middle Ages has come down to the modern times and the great interest which the nations of the West took in Darwin's Theory is in all probability due more to the common man's antipathy to the orthodox teachings of the Church than to his love of science as such. With the emancipation of the mind, democracy, the rule of Demos, the common people, grew and for good or evil man cherished freedom of thought, freedom of expression and free institutions.

Nowadays, in various parts of the

world, we notice an attitude of going back to the Dark Ages. This time it is not the Church that attempts to enchain man's mind, but it is a group of men who have constituted themselves as the dictators of the destiny of the world, who, to ensure their hold over the body, mind and spirit of man, attempt to snuff out the lamp of true learning. The Medieval Church promised eternal salvation for its votaries, but the dictators of to-day at best, promise a government post and also such negative rewards, such as freedom from concentration camps. It is no wonder that the free spirits of the world rebel against this state of affairs. They will never consent to barter away their birthright of true knowledge that emancipates, for a mere mess of pottage to sustain their physical frame.

Education that does not lead to emancipation ceases to be education. The young human plant can only attain its full growth under conditions favourable to that growth. If hedged in by limitations it would certainly become stunted. The stunted shrubs in the garden cut and trimmed to please the master's eye exhibit the injustice done to the plant itself. That species of plant called commonly the 'Madras Thorn' grows to a majestic size when allowed to grow free, but when the poor plant is trimmed to make the master's hedge, its size seldom exceeds that of a fair-sized walking-stick. The destiny of the plant would have been far better, if it had not got into the hands of the gardener. When we see some of the miserable specimens of mentally stunted human beings, coming out of the hands of an unsympathetic schoolmaster, we feel that it would have been far better for the poor boy not to have attended school, to be beaten and hammered into the shape of that old fool of a school-master.

SYNTHESIS OF CULTURES

When the undergraduate in the West is introduced to the history or philosophy of the East, the approach made may not in any way be different from that made to ancient Greek and Roman history and institutions. Sanskrit is to him as much a dead language as Greek or Latin, in a way more remote, for Sanskrit does not touch his own living culture to the same extent as the classical languages of the West. Again the number of students who go in for Sanskrit is but a fraction of those who go in for Greek and Latin. The general attitude prevailing in the West towards Indian culture is that it is a thing of the past, belonging more to the realm of the ancient and the picturesque and having very little connection with contemporary life. When people in the West compliment the Indian on being a spiritual person, there is an unconscious strain of sarcasm behind the compliment. Saints are usually more alert and intensely aware of their surroundings, but the average man's conception of sainthood is that the person who claims that distinction is a dreamy other-worldly individual, who can be easily duped. The political subjection of India is another factor that lends colour to the conception that the Indian on the whole is incapable of making a realistic approach to living problems. The interesting phenomenon of four hundred million people being held in subjection by a handful of Englishmen cannot be explained by the average Westerner except on the basis that the Indian is other-worldly and saintly which may be paraphrased to mean that the Indian is unaware of contemporary movements and therefore can be easily duped.

In the early days of the introduction of university education, the average undergraduate in India often had a wrong view of his own past. Indian history in

those days was more legend than history and the student on the whole believed his Western teacher and uncritically swallowed facts and theories placed before him. Indian history is yet to be written from the proper perspective; we are glad to hear that a band of leading scholars are taking up the task right earnestly. Even during the few decades of university education enough has been done to elucidate the fact that all that is vital in the living culture of contemporary Indian life, can be traced to the nation's own past and what has been received from alien cultures has provided a standard of values for measuring the past achievement of the nation. The appreciation of the nation's own culture had the effect of moving the pendulum a little more on the homewards side and the average educated Indian of to-day has developed that nationalism which undervalues other cultures.

The conditions are most favourable in India for a synthesis of Eastern and Western cultures than in any other part of the world. If the universities in this country give earnest thought to the matter they can give a new lead to the humanities and make both Eastern and Western cultures living and real to the Indian student by approaching both

with true sympathy and understanding. Let the Indian student feel that Plato and Aristotle belong to him as much as they belong to his brother in the West. Let him develop the religious toleration to understand that. St. Francis of Assisi, and St. Ignatius of Loyola and other saints and mystics of Christendom trod the same path as Kabir and Tulasidas. In the realm of literature, the average Indian student confined his reading to a few English Authors. This will not do. To obtain a proper perspective of Western culture, the Indian student should read at least in translation something of Italian and French literature both of which influenced the thought-currents manifested in English literature and also a few of the Latin and Greek classics which influenced all these. To understand Eastern culture, he has to dream the dreams which inspired the poets of Iran and Araby in West Asia and Nippon and China in the East. The time has come for a new orientation and all who love India sincerely hope that the Indian student will considerably widen his outlook, manifesting in his life and thought the best that the East and West have to offer and thereby become a leading citizen in the coming World-State.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

ITALIAN ECONOMY AND CULTURE. A STUDY IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS. BY MONINDRA MOHAN MOULIK, D.Sc., POL. (Rome), HONORARY SECRETARY, BENGALI INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY. Published by Messrs. Chuckerverthy, Chatterjee & Co., Ltd., 15, College Square, Calcutta. Pp. 185. Price Rs. 3.

The author who has spent four years in Italy imbibing the culture of the country and exploring its life-currents has written a very human and readable book. He takes us along the old *Via Appia* to the ruins of ancient Rome; he leads us to the enchanting *Campagna Romana* and to little fishing villages giving us glimpses of the past glory of Rome. He puts us in touch with Gabriele D'Annunzio, whom he considers to be a greater artist in life than in poetry. He introduces us to Luigi Pirandello whom he met in Rome. He comes nearer to India when he gives us an account of Giuseppe Tucci. Interwoven with these are his chapters on national economy, work and leisure of the Italians of to-day and the agricultural remaking of Italy. The printing and the general get-up of the book are very satisfactory.

A PRIMER OF MALAYALAM LITERATURE. BY SAHITYAKUSALAN, T. K. KRISHNA MENON, B.A., KUMARALAYAM, ERNAKULAM, COCHIN STATE. Published by Messrs. B. G. Paul & Co., 12, Francis Joseph St., Madras. Pp. 89. Price 12 As.

The author is a former Editor of the *Vidya Vinodini*, the Malayalam literary periodical, and has also several other books to his credit. The author in his prefatory note says, 'I wrote this brochure, while a college student, at the instance of the late Mr. R. C. Dutt, who wanted it for a work called the *History of Hindu Civilization under British Rule* which his son-in-law, the late Mr. P. N. Rose, Head of the Geological Department, was then writing. In this I have now made only such changes as the

lapse of time necessitated.' The book divides the entire period of growth of Malayalam into four epochs: I. Karin-Tamil 3100 B.C.—100 B.C., II, Old Malayalam 100 B.C.—A.D. 325, III. Middle Malayalam A.D. 325—A.D. 1425 and IV. Modern Malayalam A.D. 1425 onwards. Within a short compass the book provides a great deal of valuable information bringing the story from ancient times up to the present day. We do not know how far the author is correct in ascribing Kulasekhara Alwar to the first of these epochs. We also hold the same view as Mahakavi Ullur S. Parameswar Aiyar regarding the date of the last of the Perumals. On the whole the book is a very valuable contribution to a subject which is not sufficiently known outside. The value of the book is enhanced by the account which the author has given concerning Malayalis who have written works in Sanskrit.

ALLAHABAD UNIVERSITY STUDIES. Senate House, Allahabad.

The Allahabad University has recently brought out, for its various sections, a number of valuable books on sciences and arts, which contain original contributions from some distinguished scholars of the University. They are:—(1) *P. Dussen's Interpretation of Vedanta*—by A. C. Mukerji. (2) *Memoirs of Bayazid*—by Banarsi Prasad Saxena, M.A., Ph.D. (3) *Interpretation of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads of Indian States*—by K. R. R. Sastry, M.A., M.L. (4) *Brassware Industry of Moradabad*—by Susheel Chandra Chaudhri, M.A., B.Com. The book brought out for the Hindi section contains two well-known works of Nandadas. They are *Ankarithamanjari* and *Namamala*—the former is somewhat similar to a dictionary and gives all the different meanings of a number of words; the latter is a collection of synonyms.

NEWS AND REPORTS

BIRTHDAY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The birthday of Swami Vivekananda falls this year on 19th January, 1941.

BENARES

The thirty-ninth anniversary of the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service was held in the Mission premises on the 18th of October 1940. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, M.A., D.Litt., Bar-at-Law, occupied the chair. The function commenced with an opening song after which Sri Bimalanandan Prasad, the Hony. Treasurer, read the report of the activities of the Institution for the year 1939. Swami Avinashananda, Dr. S. N. Das Gupta, Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Pramatha Nath Tarkabhusan and Pandit Ram Narayan Misra addressed the meeting. All the speakers paid high tributes to the non-sectarian spirit and the lofty ideal of service that permeated the activities of the Sevashrama. The President in his concluding speech said that he was highly pleased with the non-sectarian

spirit of the Ramakrishna Mission and the absence of any provincialism in them. Of all those great souls who toiled for the regeneration of India, Swami Vivekananda was the greatest and a complete national re-awakening was possible only on the lines chalked out by him. His activities were the fulfilment of the ideas of Sri Ramakrishna, like the activities of King Asoka, which were the fulfilment of the grand ideas of Lord Buddha. But while Asoka's messengers of peace had the political power of an emperor behind them, Swami Vivekananda had only his Brahmacharya and self-reliance to back him in his activities at home and abroad.

With a vote of thanks to the President and the speakers the meeting came to a close.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, DACCA

The activities of the Ramakrishna Mission, Dacca, during the year 1939, may be placed under the following heads:

Charitable: A total number of 13,232 patients were treated in the Homoeopathy Outdoor Dispensary conducted by the Mission. Monthly and occasional doles of rice were distributed among 30 and 238 families respectively. Cloths were given to the poor students of the Mission M. E. School and 51 pieces of blankets were distributed among some needy persons. Besides these, help in cash was rendered to some poor people. 2 dead bodies were cremated and 3 helpless patients were attended. Removal of water-hyacinth from a 'Khal' and fire relief work in a locality of the town also were undertaken by the Mission during the year under review.

Educational: 4 Free Schools—3 within the municipal area and 1 outside—are run by the Mission. About 500 students,

both boys and girls, receive education from these schools. 2 Free Libraries with a Reading-Room attached to each are conducted at two different places. The number of books issued during the year went up to 4,482. Some poor students were helped with monthly stipends, books and dress.

Missionary: A total number of 207 regular weekly classes on the Gita, the Upanishads, the Bhagavata and the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna were held and 32 occasional lectures on various topics of religious interest were organized during the year. The birthday anniversaries of the great leaders of religions were duly observed.

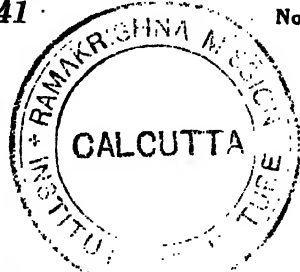
Present Needs: (1) Rs. 5,000/- for extending the existing land. (2) Rs. 2,500/- for purchasing books for the Libraries. (3) Rs. 2,500/- for constructing a compound wall. (4) Rs. 50,000/- for a Permanent Fund for the schools.

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

SRI RAMAKRISHNA IN A SILENT MOOD;
THE VISION OF MAYA

Tuesday, 11 August 1885.

Sri Ramakrishna is in the temple at Dakshineswar. He is observing silence to-day from 8 a.m. till 3 p.m.

Sri Ramakrishna is ill. Has he come to know that the time for his final departure from this world is approaching near, that he is to retire again to the lap of the Mother of the universe? And is this why he is observing silence? The Holy Mother is shedding tears at the sight that he is not talking. Rakhal and Latu are also in the same plight. The Brahmin lady who comes from Baghbazar, has just arrived. She too is weeping. Now and then the devotees are asking, ‘Have you taken this vow for the whole life?’

Sri Ramakrishna indicates by a sign that it is not so.

At 8 p.m. Naran arrives. The Master breaks his silence with the words, ‘The Mother will bless you.’

With great delight Naran carries the news to the devotees that the Master has spoken to him. Rakhal and other devotees feel as if a heavy weight has been lifted off their chest. All of them come and sit near Sri Ramakrishna.

Sri Ramakrishna (to Rakhal and other devotees): ‘The Mother was revealing to me that everything is Maya. She alone is true and all else that exists is only a manifestation of Maya. The stages of spiritual progress that the different devotees have attained was also unveiled to me.’

Naran and other devotees: ‘Well, how far has each of them advanced?’

Sri Ramakrishna: ‘I saw the states Nityagopal, Rakhal, Naran, Purna, Mahima Chakravarty and others have attained.’

SRI RAMAKRISHNA IN THE COMPANY OF
GIRISH, SASIADHAR PANDIT AND OTHER
DEVOTEES

The devotees in Calcutta have come to know of the illness of Sri Rama-

krishna. All are of opinion that it is the throat that has been affected.

It is Sunday, the 16th of August, to-day. Many devotees including Girish, Ram, Nityagopal, Mahima Chakravarty, Kishori Gupta, Pandit Sashadhar Tarkachudamani and others have come to see him. The Master is joyful as before and talks with the devotees.

Sri Ramakrishna : 'I cannot pray to the Mother for this illness. I feel ashamed of it.'

Girish : 'My Narayana will cure you.'

Ram : 'It will be cured.'

Sri Ramakrishna (with a smile) : 'Yes, let me have this blessing from you.' (All laugh).

Girish has begun coming only recently. The Master tells him, 'You are to live amidst great troubles and have many things to do. Come here for another three times.' Now he speaks to Sashadhar.

BRAHMAN AND THE PRIMAL DIVINE ENERGY ARE IDENTICAL

Sri Ramakrishna (to Sashadhar) : 'Let us hear something of the Ādyāshakti (Primal Divine Energy) from you.'

Sashadhar : 'What do I know!'

Sri Ramakrishna (with a smile) : 'A man was very much devoted to a certain person. Once he asked the devotee to bring a little fire for him to smoke. The man replied, "Am I worthy of bringing fire for your high self?" and did not move at all to get the fire!' (All laugh).

Sashadhar : 'Yes, revered sir, She is both the efficient and the material cause. She has created the world and its beings, and again, it is She who has become all these. It is like the spider that makes its net by spinning out the thread from within.'

Sri Ramakrishna : 'It is further said that He who is the Purusha or Brahman is one and the same as Shakti. When

He is inactive and withdraws from the threefold activity of creation, preservation and destruction, He is called by the name Brahman or Purusha; and when He is active and engages in these works, He is called by the name Shakti or Prakriti. He who is Brahman is the same as Shakti, He who is the Purusha is also the Prakriti. Water is nothing but itself whether it remains steady or undulates. A serpent is the same whether it moves in a tortuous course or coils up and sits still in a place.

ENJOYMENT AND WORK

'Brahman cannot be expressed in words of mouth; speech becomes dumb in its attempt to express it. If one goes on repeating the line, "My Nitai is like a mad elephant," he cannot, after a time, utter the whole sentence, but keeps on repeating the word "elephant" only! He cannot hold on long even to this word but sticks only to the first letter of it by dropping the rest. This first letter also he misses at the end and becomes lost to all sense of the external world.'

As the Master says this, he loses himself in the state of Samadhi. He is standing, but is merged in Samadhi.

Some time elapses after the Master descends from the state of Samadhi. He then says, 'One cannot express in words what lies beyond the realms of the Kshara and the Akshara (the Mutable and the Immutable).'

All are silent. The Master says again, 'One cannot attain Samadhi till even a little attachment, that must result either in enjoyment or suffering, is left in him and till there is any Karma destined to be worked out in this life is left unexhausted.'

(To Sashadhar) : 'The Lord keeps you engaged now in works such as lecturing etc., and you will have to do them now.'

'You will be free after you have finished this work. When the mistress of a house, after finishing all her household works, goes to the pond for a bath, she does not return in a hurry even if she is called repeatedly.'

HOW TO GET RID OF DESIRES

BY SWAMI TURIYANANDA

'Karma-Yoga is for persons who are desirous' (Bhagavata XI. xx. 7). It is clear from this that desireless action can never be possible for those who are desirous. Their work, to be sure, is desire-prompted, but that does not make it necessarily blamable. It is reprehensible only if it is not sanctioned by the Shastras and is heinous. Persons with immoderate desires for enjoyment are bound to do desire-prompted works in order to satisfy those cravings. They will not even have a clear apprehension of desireless action, though they are taught about it. So the Shastras prescribe desire-prompted work for them. It is not that the Gita has enjoined only desireless action. It has also talked of desire-prompted work in verses like, 'Having created mankind along with the sacrifices, . . .' (Gita III. 10).

The long and short of it is, can mere precept be effective? And are all precepts of the same nature? Precepts are seen to vary for persons differing in fitness. Men appreciate precepts for which they are fit; and following them with faith they even attain what is good. So the Lord says: 'Devoted each to his own duty, man attains the highest perfection' (Gita XVIII. 45). Each doing works for which he is fit, should gradually strive after making his nature full of the Sattva Guna—this is the gist of the Shastras. The person who by nature excessively craves for enjoyment must have some satisfaction

of his desires. His desire for enjoyment will never cease by mere precepts forcibly taught. But then it is very necessary to have discrimination between the Real and the unreal along with enjoyment, for desire can never be appeased by enjoyment. It increases all the more like fire fed with fat. So discrimination also should go with enjoyment. In that case illumination may come in the course of time through discrimination, as it happened in the case of King Yayati. Of course desireless work should be the aim, but it is not possible through sheer force. Really speaking desireless action is not practicable at all. None becomes desireless without attaining Knowledge. Desireless action attempted before the attainment of Jnana is like the work mentioned in the verse, 'One who is desirous of the Divine Person is without desire,' that is to say, the work done with a view to realize God is desireless work. As the Master used to say, desire for devotion is no desire, *hinche* is no spinach, sugar candy is not among the sweets, or lemon is not among the sour things which do harm. That is to say, desire for devotion is never a cause of bondage. Work done in this spirit of dedication to God is desireless work. Otherwise only the Jnanins can do true desireless work, because Knowledge has destroyed all their desires. None but the Jnanin is capable of desireless action. But as I have just said, work done for the attainment of Jnana, even

if there be the desire for Jnana, can be called desireless work. Discrimination in regard to work is extremely difficult. So the Lord has said: 'The nature of work is impenetrable.' 'Even the sages are bewildered as to what is action and what is inaction' (Gita IV. 17, 16).

And for this reason our Master, without going into such intricacies, has said: 'Mother, take away this Thine work and this Thine non-work, give me pure devotion; take away this Thine sin and this Thine rightousness—give me pure devotion.' None else has ever in this way taught about such easy straight way of realizing God, suitable for all. 'As the cow swallows all kinds of fodder if a quantity of oil-cake is sprinkled over it, even so God accepts all acts of worship, if it is accompanied by devotion.' What a wonderful hint the Master has given us in these words! If only man can in any manner whatever resign himself wholly to Him, can look upon Him as his only near one and can dedicate to Him whatever he thinks and does, he achieves his end. Sri Krishna, the author of the Gita, repeatedly teaches the same thing to Arjuna, even as the Master has done it: 'Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou offerest in sacrifice, whatever thou givest away, whatever austerity thou practisest, O son of Kunti, do that as an offering unto Me.

Thus shalt thou be freed from the bondages of actions, bearing good and evil results: with the heart steadfast in the Yoga of renunciation, and liberated, thou shalt come unto Me' (Gita IX. 27, 28).

It is a cause for great grief that even after hearing such precepts we cannot observe them in life. It is called Karma-Yoga, because persons whose mind is attached to objects, will be able to attain to non-attachment through gradual purification of mind by doing desire-prompted works sanctioned by the Shastras and following their own professions. It is for this reason that Shastric ordinances even are held in so much esteem.

'He who, setting aside the ordinance of the Shastras, acts under the impulse of desire, attains not to perfection, nor happiness, nor the Goal Supreme.' (Gita XVI. 23).

These are the words of the Lord. But if any one can anyhow dedicate everything to God there does not remain any anxiety, fear or worry. Further, there is no more need also for bothering oneself about Shastric injunctions, or to be fussy about petty details. May God give us good understanding so that we may become heirs to everlasting peace by walking the path shown by Him. Let us not thirst for the water of the well rejecting the pure water of the Ganges which is flowing in front.

THE NEW ATTITUDE TOWARDS RELIGION

At the present time, when men's minds are busy discussing a New World-Order, a New Education, a New Freedom and so on, we need offer no apology for taking up for discussion the new trends in what is commonly considered to be the oldest of human institutions. Religion came very early into man's life. Allowing ourselves to be guided by Semitic traditions, we may say that on the day when 'the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life,' religion began. Man, a living soul, fashioned in the very image of God, did on that day stand face to face before his Maker, thereby establishing that relationship which forms the very core of the religious life. The lesser relationships that brought in the woman and the Tempter came later. Again placing ourselves under the guidance of modern science, we may say that on the day on which Homo Sapiens emerged out of his animal ancestry and standing erect gazed with wonder at the beauty of the starry firmament dimly sensing the Maker of heaven and earth, religion began. The science of anthropology has a great deal to say about primitive religion and the influence it exerted on making man a social animal, by subduing his violent passions and providing him with diverse avenues for creative self-expression. When we turn to Hindu civilization we become aware of a very rich heritage. The sacred books which constitute the religious and cultural heritage of the Hindus have come down from a hoary past and are so perfect in their form and substance that one is forced to admit that men should have passed through several millenniums of

intense religious thought and discipline to discover and formulate the grand truths contained in them. Without labouring the point further, we may take it for granted that from time immemorial religion existed and exerted a profound influence upon human society.

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World-saviours are, as it were, landmarks in the history of religion. Whenever humanity is at the cross-roads and in a state of confusion, a great prophet appears on the scene and provides the solution for the pressing problems of life. He becomes the centre around which a new integration takes place. Values which were forgotten are rediscovered and fresh values are added and new hope springs in the hearts of men. Very often a new culture develops. Men begin to mould their own life in the pattern of the great life that was lived in their midst. Under the potent influence of religion society often becomes completely overhauled. The change brought about is so great that men lose sight of the old culture of which the new one is only a growth and a fulfilment. They recognize the new as something unique and begin calling it by the name of the prophet who provided the dynamic impetus. But in all ages there have been wise men who could see a little deeper and observe the continuity of religious thought. They declare that Religion is one, although religions are many. When the life of the spirit gets quickened by the coming of a new prophet, men find in the new movement the means for a fuller life. In time the new impetus gets worked up, fresh problems arise and it becomes necessary to reinterpret the philosophy

of an existing cult, or wait for the advent of a new prophet. The course of human history records the birth, the persistence and the passing away of religious cults. Even if the cult does not altogether pass into oblivion, it loses its power to influence humanity. The religions of Egypt, of Babylonia, of Greece and of Rome have had their day and have become forgotten chapters of human history. Some of the later religions have lost their original power by crystallizing into rigid forms which do not sufficiently respond to the needs of a changing world. Some others like Hinduism have been continually strengthening themselves by giving birth to a succession of saints and seers who by their life and teachings added new vigour to the religion they practised.

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To fully comprehend the current trends in religion it would be necessary to subject contemporary life to a thorough analysis and clearly formulate its pressing problems. Moral chaos, economic disharmony and political maladjustment are noticeable everywhere. The man in the street feels that something is wrong somewhere. To ease his mind troubled with conflicting thoughts and emotions he sets about to do a little amateur philosophizing. Even as the expressing of sorrow eases to a certain extent the agony of a stricken heart, so does philosophizing ease a troubled mind. Thinking is a hard job, but to allow the mind to continue for any length of time in a state of hesitation and doubt is harder. Consequently, when the average man is confronted by any problem he feels that it is better to offer some solution and be done with it. It is said that pessimism afflicts the man who enjoys political freedom and fatalism is the philosophy of life of the enslaved. When poverty and misery

are the problems before them both are prone to take a dark view of life. Everywhere we find Jeremiahs who are not tired of telling us that the human race is heading to a fall. There is a sort of universal restlessness and also a widespread discontent. These are hard facts. The old moral restraints, the respect for authority, the mild contentment with which persons stuck on to the station in life in which they found themselves, the patient endurance exhibited by the poorer classes in facing the insolence of the rich and such other qualities which the passing generation looked upon as the products of a well ordered religious life have almost disappeared from the face of the planet. Seeing these happenings, one section of people opine that religion has failed to perform its function and another section denounce religion as an opiate of the masses and would have it altogether removed from the position it erstwhile held. This second section belongs to the school of advanced socialists. A third that swears by science—not modern science, but the discarded seventeenth century science—says that in its scheme of things there is no place for a Divine Being that rules the destinies of mankind. Scepticism is eating into the vitals of the more educated classes. The masses driven to a state of despair speak disparagingly of high and holy things.

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The creative arts, the handmaidens of religion, have suffered deterioration. The modernist poetry, painting and sculpture of contemporary Europe fail to evoke those lofty thoughts and sentiments that we associate with all good art. Men and women exhibit a tired, weary aspect. Charity which is the first and foremost of religious disciplines is on the wane. Truth is hidden in a welter of false propaganda. Justice is

assailed by narrow national and sectional interests. Man has lost faith in himself and consequently has no faith in the working of the moral law. Statisticians tell us that insanity, neurasthenia and similar maladies are on the increase. All these exhibit a state of decline. Nevertheless there is a silver lining to the cloud. Several forces are at work for the unification of humanity and for the emergence of a new civilization. As far as religion is concerned, attempts are being made to erect a common platform in which the doctors of different creeds will meet not as rivals, but as co-workers having a common aim and a common purpose. Man is learning to be more tolerant towards his neighbour's religious faith. Organizations such as the World Fellowship of Faiths testify to the new spirit pervading religion. We wish them god-speed, for they are the harbingers of a new dawn.

The West is making efforts to understand the religions of the East. The more cultured minds are trying to get at the real thing. The less educated, with characteristic shallowness, appear to be satisfied with the sham product. Herein, perhaps, lies the explanation for the fascination which some Westerners exhibit for occultism, spiritualism and cheap Yoga, things which the East discarded long ago as veritable obstacles that hinder the progress of the spiritual aspirant. The path of religious discipline is long and arduous and at every stage the light of true knowledge should illumine the path. Those that are impatient and seek short cuts may be led into blind alleys and end in confusion and disappointment. The man who practises the religion of his forefathers has a certain advantage in that he unconsciously learns many things which are extremely difficult for the neophyte to acquire. Learning to practise a new

religion is something similar to the acquiring of a new language. The grammatical rules of the mother tongue are acquired almost unconsciously, whereas the rules governing a foreign language have to be consciously acquired by accurate study and application. Consequently outsiders who are interested in the study of Hinduism would do well to make a careful study of the philosophical thought of the Hindus. 'Religion without philosophy runs into superstition; philosophy without religion becomes dry atheism' (Swami Vivekananda). Here philosophy should be taken in the broad sense of insight, enlightenment regarding essentials. According to one's standard of education, one can make a serious study of relevant religious texts and acquire a clear conception of the essentials. The conversion of children and ignorant adults to an alien faith cannot be justified, for it is not possible for them to arrive at true convictions based upon reason. As religion is a way of life, it is best for the majority to stick to the path that is familiar to them.

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The mechanistic conception of the universe held by older scientists has broken down before the brilliant achievements of modern physics. Physical science has now become an ally of idealistic philosophy; and the alliance, we dare say, is advantageous to both the contracting parties. Philosophy from being mere speculation has taken a firm stand on scientifically observed facts and conclusions arrived at by sound reasoning. Science on the other hand has risen above the reproach of being blind to the realm of reality that lies outside the limitations of sense perception. The time is, therefore, most opportune for broadening the ranges of both science and philosophy. The mental discipline demanded by the accurate sciences is

also something akin to the discipline demanded by religion. Science seeks for unity amidst diversity. All matter has been reduced to ninety-two elements and these have been shown to be built up of varying numbers of units of energy. Matter, in fact, has been dematerialized by science. Mathematics, the science *par excellence* appears to hold the key to the final explanation of the material universe and mathematical concepts belong to the realm of ideas. The pure scientist travelling along his own chosen path knocks at the portals of religion and gains entrance. God has been conceived as the Supreme Mathematician.

* * *

The Deity has also been conceived as the Supreme Poet and the Supreme Artist. He is also the Eternal Law. There are indeed many paths which the aspirant can tread to reach the Fountain-Head of all truth, beauty and goodness. The widespread recognition of this fact is one of the new trends in the religious attitude of the modern man. Viewed in this light all education, in the true sense of the word, is religious education. The barriers between the sacred and the secular in matters educational was only a passing phase as the history of education as well as the history of religion definitely shows. The ascendancy of the positive sciences has also made the educated man to seek for a scientific religion, a religion that would satisfy the reasoning faculty of man. Humbler folk who seek the consolation that religion affords desire a simpler faith that would be easily intelligible, a faith centring round a Personal Deity to whom they can address their prayers. Religion, therefore, should be many-sided. 'If a religion cannot help man wherever he may be, wherever he stands, it is not of much use; it will remain only a theory

for the chosen few. Religion, to help mankind, must be ready and able to help him in whatever condition he is, in servitude or in freedom, in the depths of degradation or on the heights of purity; everywhere equally, it should be able to come to his aid' (Swami Vivekananda). The Hindu religion is known to cover a vast range. Its rituals, its mythology and its philosophy grew up to meet the varying demands of various people and consequently it has the potency to help man, wherever he may be.

* * *

To the early Indian thinkers, philosophy was not a mere intellectual quest. The search for the Reality underlying the changing phenomena of nature and the vicissitudes of human life was to them something more than a life and death problem. They were not satisfied with merely explaining the sense-manifold, but boldly sought to pierce the veil and go to the very source of all truth, beauty and goodness. What the rest of the world classifies as the special experience of mystics and seers formed the raw material of the philosophical speculations of the thinkers of the Upanishadic period. They who ventured upon the pursuit of absolute truth recognized the necessity for perfecting the instruments used in the investigation. The mind, the supreme tool of the student of philosophy had to be purged of all bias and prejudice and consequently the researcher had to keep himself aloof from the competitive life of society and undergo a rigorous discipline. The science of Yoga that prescribed the necessary discipline was perfected a very long time ago, at any rate as early as the time of the Mohenjo-Daro civilization. Language and logic had also to be perfected and this resulted in the elaboration of various schools of thought all of which were limbs of the idealistic

philosophy of the Upanishads. Direct realization of the Supreme Truth was held to be the goal and all other disciplines were counted as the means. The contemplative after completing his spiritual education could return to society and take an active interest in its affairs. Plato's scheme of education also was something similar.

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In the existing order of things, it is not possible for the large majority of men to follow the method of Plato and of the early Indian thinkers. The new attitude seems to be for harmonizing the active life and the life of contemplation. While continuing to perform the ordinary duties of citizen, the modern man would like to pursue the path that leads to the Supreme Good. This is by no means impossible. The stories of the housewife and the butcher related in Vedantic lore illustrate the possibility of attaining the highest knowledge, while pursuing the ordinary avocations of life. Let us relate the said stories briefly. A young aspirant retired to a forest and spent several years performing rigorous Yogic practices. One day while he was musing under a tree, some dead leaves fell on his head. He looked up and saw a crane and a crow fighting. He angrily glanced at them and such was the young Yogin's power that a flash of fire went forth from his eyes and reduced the birds to ashes. Satisfied with himself, he went to the neighbouring village and entering the first house asked for food. Someone from inside the house asked him to wait a little. Feeling rather offended, he was thinking within himself that the person who dared to slight him like that knew not his powers. While this thought crossed his mind, came a voice from inside the house: 'Boy, don't think too much of yourself; here is neither crow nor crane.' The Yogin was nonplussed. A short while after

when the housewife came with the alms, he fell at her feet and asked, 'Mother, how did you know what took place in the forest.' To which she replied: 'My son, I know nothing of your Yoga and such other practices; I am a poor illiterate woman; and from my young days, I endeavoured to do my duty to my parents and then to my husband; I was tending my sick husband when you came and asked for alms; I could read what passed in your mind, I could also see clearly what transpired in the forest; I seem to have acquired these powers merely by the performance of my duties; if you want to know more, go to the neighbouring town, where in the market-place you would meet a butcher, who may tell you something higher.' Taking leave of her, the young Yogin went to the neighbouring town and as directed met the butcher. At first the Yogin was reluctant to approach him, seeing him cutting big hunks of meat. But reassured by the fact that the butcher like the housewife knew all about him, the Yogin followed the butcher to his house and there witnessed the devotion with which the butcher nursed his old parents and learnt that such service led to the remarkable illumination which the butcher possessed. The performance of one's duty with a spirit of non-attachment is thus seen to be the path most suitable for the householder to attain illumination. This path has been fully expounded by Swami Vivekananda in his Karma-Yoga.

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But the one great fact to be borne in mind is that it is not possible to serve both God and mammon. The aspirant for spiritual illumination must be non-attached to self and power, to fame and social advancement, to lusts and objects of desires, to anger and hatred and even to philanthropy. Keeping

himself free of all attachment, he may yet continue to discharge the duties towards his family, his country and humanity. Fortunate is the man who lives under a Government that does not interfere with a citizen's private beliefs and in a society that is not over-competitive in its economic outlook. When society is constituted on Dharmic principles, it is easy for the individual citizen to walk along the path of righteousness. The New World-Order, if it is to help humanity to achieve the higher ends of life, should be constituted with that definite object in view. As India has not as yet won its own political freedom, the world outside does not pay sufficient attention to Hindu Dharma as applied to the solution of social and political problems. The range of Hindu thought is vast, for it touches all aspects of life. It has been cynically observed that the Hindu bathes religiously and eats religiously. If the whole truth were to be told, the forefathers of the present-day Hindus fought in the battle-field religiously, conquered religiously, administered kingdoms and empires religiously, dispensed justice religiously, traded religiously, did manual work religiously, married religiously and brought up children religiously. Religion as a matter of fact pervaded the whole life. India's highest contribution to the world would certainly be this unified conception of life, the integrating factor being religion.

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Why is there conflict between Science and Religion in the West? It is simply

because the scientist provides one outlook and the priest another. Both are partial views of life. Truth embraces the partial realizations of the scientist and the priest and works out the grand symphony where all partial views get harmonized. Sun's light comprises the seven colours of the spectrum, they lose their individualities when blended into a harmonious whole and reach our eyes as a single white light. Why do we dislike Nazism and Fascism? Mostly because they are partial views of life, they are exclusive and do not permit every one to develop according to his own chosen way. Religious intolerance is also disliked for the same reason. The modern man demands that religion, if it were to persist and continue to exert its influence upon human society should become fuller and richer. It should have the highest educative value. While not contradicting the conclusions of positive science, it should rise above mere rationalism and lead man to a conception of the supra-rational. It should provide the mental discipline necessary for the solution of the complex problems of modern life helping the individual to take his proper place in human society. The peace and consolation that it grants should begin here and continue through all eternity. Such, in brief, is the modern educated man's conception of religion. If we look for one system of thought that provides all these requirements, we find it in the Vedanta Philosophy.

MAYAVATI,
22 December 1940.

PHILOSOPHY OF CLOTHES

BY DR. M. HAFIZ SYED, M.A., PH.D., D.LITT.

The opinions regarding Carlyle's life and philosophy are of the most varied complexion. A writer in *Blackwood* called him a 'blatant impostor,' the *Quarterly* 'did not think he was a deep thinker;' *Frazer's Magazine* summed up its opinion by saying, 'He cultivated a contempt of the kindly race of men.' Once an Indian scholar remarked that Carlyle was a philosopher run mad. On the other hand John Morley said, Carlyle was 'not only one of the foremost literary figures of his own time, which is comparatively a small thing, but one of the greatest moral forces for all time.' He has influenced the men of influence. His first convert of note was Emerson. There is good reason for believing that Carlyle's Sartorian philosophy aided Tennyson in his great task of completing *In Memoriam*. Ruskin, who came later, is also proud to acknowledge Carlyle as his master in his humanitarian efforts. The attitude of Huxley and Tyndal towards him is not unknown. To the student of Indian philosophy, however, the sage of Chelsea has a special and peculiar charm. The fruits of the French Revolution, in which men, inflamed with the passion of liberty, flung overboard the old settled ideas of society and faith, had spread over Europe. They cast to the winds many vital principles and eternal interests. The result was the advent into Europe of blank materialism. For the materialist there was no God. Mind was a manifestation of matter, and life was explained as a system and sequence of mechanical effects from mechanical causes. Carlyle could find no satisfaction in the materialistic explanation of

the universe. He searched for salvation elsewhere than in the dead, soulless void of a mechanical world. He found it in the message of Kant, Fichte and Goethe, especially the last; and *Sartor Resartus* contains the explanation of the enigma, as it appeared to him. Nature appeared to him a vocal expression of a living and a sentient God. Matter is a manifestation of spirit, 'the garment and clothing of the higher celestial invisible, unimaginable, formless, and dark with an excess of bright.' His interpretation of the universe is illumined by his favourite quotation from Shakespeare, 'We are such stuff as dreams are made of, and our little life is rounded with a sleep,' corroborated by that utterance of the life-spirit of Goethe :

It is thus at the roaring loom of
time I ply,

And weave for God the garment
thou seest Him by.

Everything in life, the little conventions, creeds, and institutions, all seemed to him to have a striking analogy to the garments in which humanity clothes itself. It will not be wrong to assume that Carlyle, so far as we know, was the only writer in the English language, in whom the idea of the philosophy of clothes dawned for the first time. 'It might strike the reflective mind,' says he, in the opening chapter of *Sartor Resartus*, 'with some surprise that hitherto little or nothing of a fundamental character, whether in the way of philosophy or history, has been written on the subject of clothes.'

Before elucidating his meaning and entering into the spirit of his wonderful

philosophy in the light of Indian thought it is necessary to quote his own words bearing on this subject. In the fifth chapter, 'the World in clothes,' he says: 'Clothes gave us individuality, distinctions, social polity; clothes have made men of us; they are threatening to make clothes-screen of us.' In the seventh chapter we come across the following: 'Did we behold the German fashionable dress of the fifteenth century, we might smile; as perhaps those bygone Germans, were they to rise again, and see our haberdashery, would cross themselves, and invoke the Virgin. But happily no bygone German, or man rises again, thus the present is not needlessly trammelled with the past, and only grows out of it, like a tree, whose roots are not intertangled with its branches, but lie peaceably underground. Nay, it is very mournful, yet not useless, to see and know, how the greatest and dearest, in a short while, would find his place quite filled up here, and no room for him; the very Napoleon, the very Byron, in some seven years, has become obsolete and were now foreigner to his Europe. Thus is the law of progress secured; and in clothes, as in all other external things whatsoever, no fashion will continue.' In 'The World out of clothes' we meet the following striking words: 'Teufelsdröckh undertakes no less than to expound the moral, political, even religious influences of clothes; he undertakes to make manifest, in its thousandfold bearings, this grand proposition, that man's earthly interests are all hooked and buttoned together, and held up, by clothes.' He says in so many words: 'Society is founded upon cloth; and again, society sails through the Infinitude on cloth.' Further we read the following: 'Pity that all metaphysics had hitherto proved so inexpressibly unproductive! The secret of man's being is

still like the Sphinx's secret, a riddle that he cannot read; and for ignorance of which he suffers death, the worst death, a spiritual. What are your axioms, and categories, and systems, and aphorisms? Words. Words. High Air-Castles are cunningly built of words, the words well-bedded also in good Logic-mortar; wherein however no knowledge will come to lodge.' In the chapter on 'Prospective,' he says, 'All visible things are emblems; what thou seest is not there on its own account; strictly taken is not there at all: Matter exists only spiritually, and to represent some idea and body it forth. Hence clothes as despicable as we think them, are so unspeakably significant. Clothes, from the king's mantle downwards, are emblematic, not of want only, but of a manifold cunning victory over want. On the other hand, all emblematic things are properly clothed, thought-woven and hand-woven; must not the imagination weave garments visible bodies, . . .' Further we come across the following: 'Men are properly said to be clothed with authority, clothed with beauty, with curses and the like. Nay, if you consider it, what is man himself, and his visible terrestrial life, but an emblem; a clothing or visible garment for that Divine Me of his, cast hither, like a light-particle, down from Heaven? Thus is he said also to be clothed with a body. Language is called the garment of thought: however, it should rather be, Language is the flesh garment, the body, of thought.'

'It is written, the Heavens and the earth shall fade away like a vesture; which indeed they are: the time-vesture of the Eternal. Whatsoever sensibly exists, whatsoever represents Spirit to Spirit, is properly a clothing, a suit of raiment, put on for a season, and to be laid off. Thus in this one pregnant subject of clothes, rightly understood, is in-

cluded all that men have thought, dreamt, done, and been: the whole external universe and what it holds is but clothing; and the essence of all science lies in the philosophy of clothes.' Here ends a fairly long quotation, from Carlyle's famous book *Sartor Resartus*. Now let us turn our attention for a while to the Indian thinkers of yore, and see how much light they throw in understanding the true spirit of Carlyle as embodied in his philosophy of clothes. Whatever may be the final verdict of Western savants as to his moral and spiritual greatness, the writer of these pages has not the least doubt that Carlyle was an inspired writer; and like many 'Seers of the Essence of things' he was endowed with no little spiritual insight. It is no wonder, then, if his utterances and writings bear striking resemblances with and find ample corroboration in the teaching of the Indian thinkers of antiquity.

The Chhandogya Upanishad says: 'All this verily (is) Brahman' (III. xiv. 1).

'This' is the technical word for the universe, and the universe is Brahman, because therefrom it is born, thenceinto it is merged and thereby it is maintained. All that we see around us comes forth from that fullness and is as the shadow of that substance.

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says: 'There are two states of Brahman, formful and formless, changing and unchanging, finite and infinite, existent and beyond (existence)' (II. iii. 1).

He cannot become manifest save by clothing Himself in This, and This cannot become manifest save as illuminated ensouled, by Him: The Supreme Ishvara, by His Maya, creates, preserves, and destroys the innumerable world-systems that form the ocean of Samsāra. In one of his commentaries on Aitareyāranyaka Upanishad Sayana

says: 'All objects whatsoever, being of the nature of effects, are Upādhis for this manifestation of the Supreme Self, Sat, Chit, Ananda, the cause of the universe.' Who does not remember that immortal and well-known verse in the Bhagavad-Gita? 'As a man throws away old garments and takes others (that are) new, so the Embodied casts away old bodies and puts on new ones' (II. 22). In the Chhandogya Upanishad once more we read how man creates form or in the Carlylean phraseology the tailor makes his own dress. 'He who has the consciousness, "May I smell," he the Atman, in order to smell, (makes) the organ of smell; he who has the consciousness, "May I speak," he the Atman, in order to speak (makes) the voice; he who has the consciousness, "May I hear," he the Atman, in order to hear (makes) the organ of hearing; he who has the consciousness, "May I think," he, the Atman (makes) the mind, his divine eye.'

There are three worlds in which the Jivatman circles round on the wheel of births and deaths. These are: Bhurloka, the physical earth; Bhuvarloka, the world next the physical, and closely related to it but of finer matter; Svarloka or Svarga, the heavenly world. Beyond these are four other worlds, belonging to the higher evolution of the Jivatman, viz. Maharloka, Janarloka, Taparloka and Satyaloka. There are also seven Shariras (bodies)—Sthula, Sukshma, Kāraṇa, Buddhic, Nirvanic, etc. There are seven other worlds usually called Talas, literally surfaces which have to do with regions within the earth, that are of grosser matter than the earth. They correspond to the Lokas as an image corresponds to an object, and are on a descending scale, as the Lokas are on an ascending.

'All this,' says the author of the Devi Bhagavata, 'is made, one within the

other; when that perishes, all perish, O Narada! All this collective universe is like a water bubble, transient.'

Why does Carlyle call it philosophy of clothes instead of form or appearance or the changing world, is the next question we have to examine. Some of the characteristics of clothes we wear are: (1) we change our clothes as we grow from infancy to childhood, from boyhood to youth, from youth to manhood or as the clothes are worn out from time to time; (2) seasonableness—we vary our clothes according to the changing weather and periodical season; (3) our clothes have variety—they are not of one colour, size, shape and fashion; (4) no clothes are put on for ever. They are changed from time to time; (5) every article of habiliment is not as a rule made by us but by a tailor who is an expert in dress-making; (6) our garments are of our own creation and not made by God. All that applies to clothes in their variety, seasonableness, changeability, etc. holds good in the case of our thoughts and views, customs and creeds, social and political opinions of every kind and every age. If our views and institutions lack adaptability and flexibility they are sure to become out of date and effete. Everything that has a beginning must have an end is a fundamental thought of Indian philosophy. The unborn, perpetual, eternal and ancient is the only reality that is free from change. All human institutions, human knowledge, human society, political and religious organizations have their age. They come and go with the changing world. None can retard the slowly moving march of the divine plan of evolution. Whether we like it or not, in exact accordance with the Divine Will, we grow, blossom, wither and die. Those who work in harmony with the divine plan succeed in their efforts, prosper and shine, whereas those that oppose it are

wrecked and ruined. Not only human institutions and man-made customs and creeds but also the world-systems, planets and mighty civilizations have their 'little day' and pass away, yielding place to new ones. Every outer garment of our thought and life is only a means to an end and not an end in itself. When they once serve their purpose they are no longer required.

In view of the various characteristics of clothes just stated, our thoughts and views, customs and conventions, should be modified and altered to suit the exigency of time. Differences of caste, creed and colour, minor and unessential as they are, should be tolerated and not made much of. Rigidity in thought and custom, and dogmatism should be depreciated in the light of these considerations. Open-mindedness and unbiassed attitude of mind will alone help us to view things rightly.

People have been accustomed for a long time to look upon the phenomenal universe as the only reality and therefore they attach great importance to the passing and fleeting things of this world. If they had right discrimination and knew how to differentiate between the real and the unreal, the essential and the unessential side of every object, they would never waste their precious breath and energy in wrangling over so many shifting problems of life. History bears no little evidence to the heart-rending conflicts and feuds, crusades, industrial exploitations and political aggrandizements that have been existing in almost all countries of the world. What an incalculable amount of human life and property has been recklessly destroyed for the mere gratification of national greed, vanity and false idea of prestige! If the leading men in all nations had correct perspective and right discriminative visions, they would have made up their differences, put an end to war and

thus minimized human suffering. Human beings generally forget the ephemeral nature of our existence in this world.

Man's clothes are changed as he grows in stature and in size. Why should we then feel sorry and blame anybody if we have to part with any of our out-of-date views and customs that are no longer useful? We cannot help adoring what we burnt and burning what we adored. 'Thou grieveest for those that should not be grieved for. . . . the wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead' (Bhagavad-Gita II. 11).

Robert Briffault in his famous book *The Making of Humanity* says, 'Our age which is witnessing the dissolution of all the traditional sanctions of ethics, which tears without awe or scruple the veil from every sentiment and convention, which questions with unprecedented temerity the very principle of good and evil, this sceptical iconoclastic age, has not only given more practical effect, more current realization to those ideals of temperance and compassion which previous ages dreamed of and preached; this emancipated sacrilegious age is doing more, it is carrying those ideals higher, it is creating new ones; it is witnessing the development of a higher and truer conception of ethics, evolving a loftier morality.' The foremost factor in that development is precisely the perception of that human evolution which seems to have close relation with the philosophy of clothes.

It is interesting to note that only human beings stand in need of clothes, because they alone are endowed with creative thoughts. Thus it is obvious that men cannot do without clothes or forms which have their temporary value. They are not to be despised and set aside. They should be taken at their right value. Similarly we should treat all human institutions, thoughts

and views, customs and creeds. It is futile to grieve over the inevitable.

Freedom of thought (and action) is our birthright. The human soul is essentially free in its nature. No creed, no dogma, no theory of things, no conception of life, no assumptions, no prejudice, must be allowed to dominate the soul.

Carlyle has dwelt on the philosophy of clothes, the outer garment of our existence at great length. It should be noted that he has not neglected to dilate upon the permanent and real side of human nature. In the concluding portion of 'Natural Supernaturalism' Carlyle eloquently declares: 'Know of a truth that only the time-shadows have perished, or are perishable; that the real being of whatever was, and whatever is, and whatever will be, is ever now and for ever.'

Compare it with the teaching of Sri Krishna (in the second chapter of the Bhagavad-Gita) who says: 'Nor at any time verily was I not, nor thou, nor these princes of men, nor verily shall we ever cease to be hereafter.' 'Know that to be indestructible by whom all this is pervaded, nor can any work the destruction of that imperishable one.'

In the 'Everlasting Yea' his sublime words 'Make thy claim of wages a zero, then, thou hast the world under thy feet' have brought peace and solace to many a weary soul. Further in the same chapter he reminds us: 'It is with renunciation that life, properly speaking, can be said to begin.'

At the root of all religions lies the idea that self-sacrifice, leading first to self-loss and then to self-realization, is the supreme law of man's higher life. If man has indeed been made in the image of God, and if the capacity of self-sacrifice is the highest attribute of man, then self-sacrifice --the going out of self in order to find new life--must be of the

essence of God. This idea is, I need hardly say, central in the teaching of the ancient Rishis. Let life itself, then, with all its limitless possibilities, become the main object of man's desire,—and material possessions will lose their charm. For the desire for them is, in its essence, a desire for property, for things which a man can claim as his own. This desire which has darkened the world with strife and misery, must give way to the desire for possessions which no man can keep to himself, which each man shares with all. Such a possession is life itself—life in all its infinitude, in all its mystery. The whole sea of life is at the service of each of us. For the fully expanded, the fully developed self is the real self. It is not until a man has arrived at the maturity of his 'true spiritual manhood' that he is free to say 'I am I' or 'I this not' (Aham etat na). To lose the apparent self is to find the genuine Self; and to find the genuine Self is to become what one really is. Every one is not fit to renounce or make his claim of wages a zero. It is a question of stage of evolution. Indian philosophers recognize the spiritual unity of mankind, but do not consider all eligible at one and the same time to tread the path of spiritual development. So long as a man is attracted by the attractive and is dragged by his desires to enjoy the objects of the senses he is going round the descending arc of the circle of evolution. He is treading the path of Pravritti or the path of forthgoing. When he is satiated with the passing phantom of the outer world he turns his back on the

mundane existence and enters the Nivritti Marga or the path of return. This is a turning point in the life of every ego. It is here that he waives all his claim of material ownership of every kind of worldly possessions. For, he has realized to the fullest extent the worthlessness of all that this world holds dear and valuable. An insight into the working of the spiritual evolution of man, helps us to understand the meaning of the temporary void and the feeling of nothingness that overcomes an aspirant on the path. At one time in his life Carlyle was dominated by this feeling of emptiness. Everything appeared to him vapid and tasteless. His 'Eternal No' is a reflection of this state of his mind, which shortly afterwards is transformed into the 'Eternal Yea,' the positive, healthy and hopeful aspect of human life. In Indian philosophy this state of mind is called Vairagya, dispassion which is the outcome of Viveka or discrimination, a tendency of mind that learns to differentiate between the Real and the unreal, Sat and Asat. This process of evolution is believed by Indian sages to be as eternal as its author.

Men differ in all ages, but their typical and psychological characteristics hold good in the main for all time. It is to prove this aspect of man's nature that Sri Krishna says: 'Flowery speech is uttered by the foolish, rejoicing in the letter of the Vedas, O Partha, saying "There is naught but this";' that is to my mind, an explanation of why Carlyle used the word 'Eternal' in connection with the negative and affirmative phases of human mind and experience.

GITA AND WAR

BY V. R. TALASIKAR, M.A., LL.B.

The history of human wars amply testifies to the fact that the spirit of war makes men forget words of wisdom; and the promptings of philosophic intuitions are overpowered by slogans and clash of arms. Nevertheless, it is also equally true that wars have been the occasions on which the world has witnessed some of the rarest heights of philosophic thought. No better illustration can be cited than the Gita.

As every student of Hindu philosophy knows, this divine philosophic revelation sprang in the very midst of the din of mighty forces facing each other with a sanguine fervour. It was the greatest war of the ancient world, provoked by the same spite and dross in human nature as now, but certainly less brutal and more humane than the present civilized warfare. It is one of the most amazing paradoxes in the history of Indian philosophy that the deafening sounds of fierce unreason should give rise to the perennial melodies of the Holy Song.

And what other problem should it tackle under these conditions? There were countless legions on the historic battle-field, awaiting the order of the great attack. They knew that they were taking arms against their own kith and kin, but they were ruthlessly being impelled to grapple at each other's throat. So the problem was essentially one of war. The instinct which drove men to war still inheres, or it would be more correct to say that it is on the increase by reason of the widespread acceptance of mechanistic dogmas and the absence of moral values. Arjuna entertained serious misgivings regarding

the desirability of war in general and then follows an argumentation unparalleled in the history of the world, carried on by the Lord Himself.

Sri Krishna being the charioteer of Arjuna had brought the hero to the battle-field obviously for the purpose of obtaining natural justice by the force of arms. Nobody knows why such an indomitable hero should, at the sight of arrayed forces, totter in his shoes. He had been the victor in countless wars; his faculty of reason was always steady; but this time mysteriously enough his reason—imperfect as it proved to be in the long run—got the upper hand and paralysed his impulse to action: in a word, conscience had made a coward of him.

It is very instructive to learn the splendid chain of arguments which he tried to advance in support of his contention regarding the devastating nature of human warfare. It must be pointed out that these arguments represent the height of sociological thought not only in a period shrouded in mystery but even in these days of modern sociological developments. Arjuna tried to sum up very briefly the effects of war from the standpoint of the isolated individual, chiefly from the standpoint of the family which is the unit of society and lastly from the standpoint of the welfare of social strata and group as a whole. At a later stage I shall briefly examine the question whether these arguments have been met with adequately on the same ground.

Arjuna begins by saying that:

'Slaying these sons of Dhritarashtra, what pleasure can be ours? Killing

these desperadoes *sin will but take hold of us*' (Ch. I. 86).

Therefore,

'We should not kill the sons of Dhritarashtra, our relatives; for how, killing our kinsmen, may we be happy?' (37).

The answer is in the next two verses.

'Although these, with intelligence overpowered by greed, see no guilt in the *destruction of a family*, no crime in hostility to friends' (38).

'Why should not we learn to turn away from such a sin, we who see the evils in the destruction of a family?' (39).

And the destruction of a family entails the following things :—

'In the destruction of a family the immemorial family traditions perish; in the perishing of traditions lawlessness overcomes the whole family' (40).

'Owing to predominance of lawlessness, the women of the family become *corrupt* and from women corrupted, there arises caste confusion' (41).

'This confusion drags to hell the slayers of the family and the family; for their ancestors fall deprived of the necessary obsequial ceremonies' (42).

'By these caste-confusing misdeeds of the slayers of the family, the everlasting caste customs and laws of the family are abolished' (43).

And what is the end of such persons?

'The abode of the men whose family laws are abolished is everlastingly in hell' (44), (Dr. Annie Besant's and Bhagawandas' translation).

It must be admitted that this is quite an irresistible logical sorites. It describes quite vividly the consequences of war from a sociological standpoint. The most dreadful of all these is the rapid disintegration of the family; the observance of laws which ensure family

stability and consequently the stability of whole races and populations is in jeopardy. Thus the decay of the family is a direct result of the aggressive tendencies of the modern atomistic societies which are obsessed with values of power.

Widespread family disorganization with the consequent fall in the birth rate is an index of the decay of morals in the population. Arjuna has presented this picture of the gruesome consequences which war brings along with it and it must be confessed that Sri Krishna also has not tried to repudiate these effects. Arjuna was fighting shy of war because of these consequences which even Sri Krishna would not deny. Sri Krishna brought him round not by telling that it was possible for mankind to wage war without the fear of these consequences but essentially by moralizing and inculcating on his mind his infallible duty under those circumstances without regard to the consequence which the performance of that duty may entail. Thus we see a very queer spectacle that a sociological objection is answered in philosophical and ethical terms. It may be true that the world may be an illusion or that the existence of the world cannot be proved as an apprehensible reality. It may also be true that the best ethic for the individual as well as for the group is to be true to one's own duty without regard to the fruit of our own actions; but that would hardly go to prove that to take arms is such an act of ethical necessity which would entitle us to disregard these consequences of war.

What I wish to bring to the notice of the students of Gita is only this aspect of war which Gita has presented. I believe that it constitutes the best pacifist argument which speaks in a nutshell volumes of sociological thought.

SANTAYANA : ON THE VIEW OF TRUTH

BY ANIL KUMAR SARKAR, M.A.

[‘Santayana: An Advance towards an Evolutionary Universe’ was published in the *Prabuddha Bharata* issues of March and June, 1940. Ed.]

The secret of Santayana’s philosophy is always found in his conception of the ‘essences’ or ‘forms.’ A thorough understanding of the genesis of the ‘essences’ or ‘forms’ is found in his *The Realm of Matter*, and a culture of the real character of them is obtained in his *The Realm of Truth* and *The Realm of Essence*. In this article we are directly concerned with the analysis of the essences as found in his *The Realm of Truth*.

If we just analyse the character of an essence, we shall find that it has two aspects, viz. it has an inner character and an outer reference. In its inner character, it is viewed as purely ‘formal,’ it is only a ‘mental synthesis.’ Being a ‘mental synthesis,’ it is an experience. Being an experience, it enjoys itself. So the ‘enjoyment’ of itself is also one of its characters. As a mental synthesis, it is an experience, or an intuition, but as ‘enjoying’ that experience, it is an intellectual or spiritual grasping of the situation, in other words, it is a transcendence of its own self, being only a mental synthesis. By itself it is ‘passive,’ but as ‘enjoying’ itself it is active, or rather active or spiritual realization of itself. It is not merely a ‘consciousness,’ but an enjoyment of a consciousness, it is an illumination of consciousness.

So the analysis of the inner character of the essence, shows that it is not only a ‘mental synthesis’ or ‘awareness,’ but an illumination or enjoyment of it. The former aspect of the inner character of the essence, is the result of the interac-

tion of the psyche and the environment, and the latter aspect is the real self of the essence, it is its spiritual aspect, it is its transcendent aspect, so it is an enjoyment of its own self. The first is its ‘formal character,’ and the second is its ‘manifesting character.’ For a clear understanding of the character of the essence, in all its aspects, we must not confuse between the two. The culture of both the aspects is possible. The first will take us to the problem of truth, and the second will give us an idea of the spiritual life which we may enjoy for the mere pleasure of it, but we should not claim any material truth from it. So at any rate we should not confuse the ‘forms’ (or rather the ‘formal aspect’ of the essence) with the ‘manifestations.’ The ideal world of manifestation or pure enjoyment cannot have any reference to the external world outside, it is only a culture of the character of the essence in that aspect, it is pure enjoyment.

If we consider the essence, as merely a mental synthesis, we consider it in its ‘formal aspect.’ This is its primary aspect, it is the consideration of the problem of its origin or genesis, and in this aspect it is concerned with the problem of truth. From this let us try to deduce the character of ‘truth.’ As the ‘essence’ is a ‘psychic fusion,’ and is ‘projected’ outside, it always ‘claims’ truth, and this claiming of truth, is always a claiming of a factual truth. So going to truth itself, we may at once conclude that ‘truth’ is always ‘contingent,’ it can never be ‘necessary.’ So

the conception of necessary truth must be abandoned.¹

As the truth always belongs to the realm of essence, it is posterior to the flux of existence; in other words, it radiates from the region of facts or existences. Being an essence, it has a 'formal character,' and this alone distinguishes it from the flux of events, and for this ideal aspect, we can think of 'truth.' But, after all, the source of it is in the realm of flux. The realm of flux generates truth, and on special occasions, generates beauty or goodness. So in every case of mental synthesis, there is a possibility of the arising of truth, or at least there is a claiming of truth, for the mental synthesis is for adjusting the psyche to the environment. There may be wrong psychic fusions, resulting in wrong adjustment, but yet there is a demand of the truth. So truth is a very natural occurrence, as arising in every case of 'mental synthesis,' only in certain cases when there is the mingling of the 'tropes' in a temporary harmony, there is a possibility of the arising of beauty. In this sense 'truth' covers a greater portion of the realm of essence, than 'beauty' which arises on special occasions. But essence, truth, beauty, all come from the flux of matter. This can be better explained in the words of Santayana himself thus: "Truth, on the other hand, arises by automatic radiation from every region of fact; since no event can occur without rendering it eternally true that such an event and no other fills that point of space and time."²

Truth belongs to the realm of essence, and as such, it possesses all the characters of that realm. It is not merely an essence, but it demands an adjustment of an 'essence' to something outside. So says Santayana: "Truth

thus becomes the arbiter of success in one of the most important functions of life: that of intelligent adjustment on the part of living beings to the conditions under which they live."³

Truth like thought is aroused by events and directed upon them. It is indicative. But if we try to determine its inner character, we shall find that though it is descriptive of existence, 'it has no existence of its own, and remains an ideal standard for any opinions professing to be somewhat true, or true as far as they go.'⁴ Truth has its independent place in the realm of thought, it is not simply any idea, or it should not be confused with the mere essence, or with beauty or goodness.

Though it is a fact that the realm of essence radiates from the realm of flux, and is controlled by it, our intuition, guided by the genius of each psyche, controls the essences and directs them to the realm of truth or of error. In this connection it should be mentioned that Santayana does not like the idealists hold that mind is a train of self-existing feelings or ideas, but it is 'spirit,' a wakefulness or attention or moral tension aroused in animals by the stress of life: and the prerequisite to the appearance of any feeling or idea is that the animal should be alive and awake, attentive, that is, to what is happening, has happened, or is about to happen: so that it belongs to the essence of discoverable existence, as a contemporary philosophy has it, 'to be in the world.'⁵

This view of the mind clearly indicates that mind has a place in the realm of nature, it is only a pre-condition of the appearance of any feeling arising as a result of the interaction between the psyche and the environment. So the

¹ *The Realm of Truth* Chh. II, III, IV.

² *Ibid.* p. 40.

³ *The Realm of Truth* p. 40.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 42.

⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 50-51.

human mind has to accept whatever vision arises in it; it views the visions as true though it might not be so always, but yet the mind is often helpless. This is very beautifully expressed by Santayana himself: 'The poor human soul walks in a dream through the paradise of truth, as a child might run blindly through a smiling garden, hugging a paper flower.'⁶

The nature of mind just shown here as only a pre-condition of the arousal of feeling, may be taken as only a consciousness or a knowledge of a particular situation in the process of adjustment. It is only an occurrence, only circumstantial, but this view of mind will not give us any idea of truth. Truth, as already mentioned, is a 'form' or 'essence,' discerned in an object, or in a system of objects, by the attending mind, and this is by no means a part or a member of that existential reality. Truth is only that something which the mind can detach, it is more than the 'awareness' of a situation, it contains within it the moral impulse or stress prompting to survey a situation or holding it up to attention in the form of a recognizable essence. It is not, therefore, merely a 'dramatic perception,' or a 'fancy' as in the case of mere awareness, it is turning the situation to suit a particular purpose, in other words, it involves a moral stress. In this the myths of Freud, the dialectics of Hegel and Marx, as Santayana views them, have truth. They are truths, for they reflect the tendencies of their times. The whole universe may be viewed as purely dramatic or fictitious, but for the moral stress that is involved in our experience of the universe. To quote the author himself: 'So in the whole verbal, sensuous and moral medium through which we see the world, we may learn not to see the world falsely, but

to see ourselves truly, and the world in its true relation to ourselves. With this proviso, all the humorous and picturesque aspects of experience may be restored to the world with dramatic truth. The near is truly near, when the station of the speaker is tacitly accepted as the point of reference. The true is truly good, the foreign truly foreign, if the absoluteness of the judgement is made relative to the judge. And this judge is no vagrant pure spirit. He is a man, an animal, a fragment of the material world; and he can no more annul or reverse his hereditary nature, in reference to which things are truly foreign or good, than he can annul the external forces playing upon his organism. Thus in reporting his passionate judgements, as if they were self-justified and obligatory, the dogmatist is unwittingly reporting a truth of natural history—namely, that at that juncture such judgements on his part are normal indexes to the state of the world, and not least interesting element in it.'

This survey of Santayana regarding our experience of the universe is like the 'functional realists' of America. Charles Morris, Dewey and Boodin hold the view that though our experience is 'qualitative' or 'human,' it is real from a human standpoint in that our experience arises as a result of the interaction between the organism and the environment, and the organism itself is a function of nature.

Truth, so examined, tells us that it is a 'form' discovered in the flux of existence, it is always descriptive of fact, in fine, it is objective. Now we ask whether there is any such thing as moral truth or not. If we believe in any such thing as moral truth, we have to reject at once its objective validity, for moral truth is ideal and cannot have any objective reference. It is a pure culture

⁶ *The Realm of Truth* p. 58.

⁷ *The Realm of Truth* p. 66.

of the moral life, and the culture of moral life is only culture of moral ideal. Self-knowledge is moral ideal. This sort of life is pure spiritualism. It is an attempt to transcend our natural biological life, and is only a chase towards an ideal state of things, which can be true only of the realm of pure being or spirit.

Besides the culture of the moral truth there is the culture of truth itself. Such a culture of it is but a consideration of it as something which is superexistential and supertemporal. We ask ourselves whether there is any such thing as the 'whole truth,' or impersonal or non-existential truth. This is nothing but a direction of our attention to the realm of truth itself which is a spiritual culture of truth. In order to get a clear idea of this ideal truth, let us try to form an idea of truth 'as the memory of the universe,' and as the 'destiny of the universe'. In the first sense of truth, we take it as but the understanding of the flux of existences by the 'forms,' for the flux cannot be understood without the permanent forms. It is, therefore, the 'memory' of the universe, in that it helps us to understand it through forms. But it must be mentioned here that the 'whole truth' cannot be fully told by means of the flux of existences, so there is always an ideal truth which remains to be told. This ideality of existences in both these aspects of truth, gives us an idea of relativity between the momentary truths which are chasing the flux of existences, and the whole truth, which transcends the mere flux of events. In this context we can say that truth changes as the facts which it describes. The further observations of Santayana should also be marked here: 'On a day before the Ides of March it was true that Julius Caesar was alive : on the day after that Ides of March it had 'become true' that

he was dead. A mind that would keep up with the truth must therefore be as nimble as the flux of existence. It must be a newspaper mind.'¹

In trying to explain that the whole truth cannot be told we also referred to the fact that 'the truth changes as the facts which it describes.' Here we only pointed out that the 'whole truth' is never exhausted. But really speaking truth does not change, our 'knowledge' of truth changes. This points to the 'ideality' or 'ideal character' of truth. Truth is after all an 'essence.' So it is ideal, and being ideal, it is super-temporal. It has reference to time, but it transcends time. Returning back to the case of Caesar, can we say that he is dead long ago?' If we say so, will it be true to say that he is really dead? There is no doubt about the fact that he is dead long ago only in relation to our own times, or it might be true of his corpse if it still existed. But this is nothing but the transference of the 'sentimental colour of our temporal perspectives' to 'physical time.' So there is no objective existence of the truth referred to as here. This non-existent character of truth may further be illustrated through the character of the 'spirit' which is also ideal.

Every feeling or intuition is a self-transcendence, it is a spirit, a transcendent function of our thinking. Such transcendence in every case of mental synthesis or feeling, points out the identical character of the spirit in all moments and even in all persons, but such identity is 'qualitative only.' So the spiritual transcendence is a common occurrence in all experience. Though there is a reference to physical time, such reference is always from that transcendent centre; so; by itself, it is

¹ *The Realm of Truth* p. 88.

changeless, though it is referred to the flux of events. The survey from the spiritual centre is ideal and that centre is also ideal and changeless, as transcending time. Only due to the organic basis of the spiritual centres, that there is reference to physical time. So truth which comes from that ideal centre, must be itself non-temporal and also super-temporal, though it has a reference to physical time. But we should not forget that all such reference comes from our private perspective and is coloured sentimentally. In this way the ideality of truth is pointed out by Santayana.

Our knowledge of the past depends on memory and experience, that is to say, it is given to us by the rational element in us. It is given by the spirit which transcends the mere mental synthesis of the moment, and takes us beyond the present, to the future, and looks behind being the transcendence of the immediate present and rendering it 'past.' But says Santayana, this self-positing or transcendence in the flux of existence, places us to the future, leaving the immediate behind, and rendering it past. This knowledge of the 'future' and of the 'past' by a sort of inference or memory, being wholly rational or spiritual, is posterior to our instinctive knowledge of the 'future' and the past. Speaking of man, Santayana says: 'He is instinctive before he is rational, natural before he is artificial, and we may go further and say that he must look to the future before he can see the past.'⁹

We may ask here, Can we know the future by perception? If 'perception,' according to Santayana, means 'a sensation turned into knowledge of its ground, that is, of its present occasion,'¹⁰ then future cannot be known through perception, which limits us to the present. So Santayana says the future is known

by 'premonition.' Being controlled and actuated by 'animal faith,' man can act instinctively, believing in some future object. Premonition is more than mere anticipation in that it is grounded on the animal faith, it is thoroughly instinctive, and not intellectual as 'anticipation.' The direct knowledge of the future in the case of seers, might be dramatic or fanciful, but that cannot claim any physical or objective truth. The real basis of our experience of the future, is instinctive, and is given to us by our animal faith. The rational or spiritual knowledge of the future is a later acquisition, but its instinctive basis should never be ignored. The knowledge of the future, rationally known, is a 'hypothesis,' a 'mere fancy,' as the knowledge of the 'past,' which is also the projection of our own private perspective to the physical time, which is non-existent at the time of reference.

So if we claim truth of the future from the spiritual aspect of our experience, we shall find, that such a claiming is 'ideal,' and this consideration reflects further the ideal character of the truth itself. So the truth, viewed from the spiritual aspect, is an ideal knowledge of the present, past and the future; it is nothing but a projection of our private perspectives to the physical time. We cannot claim any physical or objective truth in such reference unless we view it from the instinctive basis of our organic life. All objectivity comes from the animal faith. So the reflection on truth from the spiritual aspect is a consideration of its ideal character, it is a form of culture of our spiritual life.

In all these considerations of truth, we have tried to study truth from the psychological and contingent standpoint. For us, truth is not a pure worship of forms, but is psychological, and has a reference to the realm of flux. Now is there anything as love of truth? There

⁹ *The Realm of Truth* p. 92.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 90.

is the further question, viz. whether the truth is intellectual or aesthetic? The second question, if analysed, refers us to the relation of truth with 'spirit,' on the one hand, and 'beauty' on the other.

The problem of love is directly concerned with the problem of life. The love is associated with the 'eternal aspect' of the realm of flux. We are inviting here a sort of Platonism, no doubt, but really love cannot stand unless there is a permanent element in this flux of life. As it wants to view the universe in its permanent aspect, it is directly connected with truth which also views the universe of flux in its eternal aspect, in the aspect of its forms. So the realm of truth is the realm of forms, the tropes, the psyches, and in such junctures, there arises consciousness. So the realm of truth is all-pervasive and wide, and only in its realm of the psyches the consciousness arises. So consciousness is the child of truth. But once the spirit or the intellectual element arises, the forms of the universe become intellectually coloured. But this worship of the permanent element in the flux of nature may be beautiful, interesting and sublime, but it is not identical with beauty either in quality or extension or status. Beauty is only an intuition of form, while truth is intellectual or spiritual, it does not aim at harmony or mere enjoyment, but it aims at rendering the flux eternal and permanent.

The spirit arises later than truth, which has its basis in the 'forms' that come in the flux. But once the spirit is awakened, it gazes at those permanent forms, and we might say it is then in love with truth. Such love may be for the ugly or for the beautiful, or for anything else, it is only a worship of the forms and nothing else. To quote Santayana: 'No matter how tragic or arid the truth may be, the spirit follows

and loves it, as the eye follows the light.'¹¹

In this sense the love of truth is automatic and also internal, and there is a joy in holding the truth, but this joy or love is not narcissistic in any way. It is clean, healthy and sacrificial love. Here there is the element of courage mixed with submission and humility. Truth cannot be the same as beauty, for it follows from the above consideration, and as well from the observations of the author himself, that 'truth does not arrange or idealize its subject-facts. It can eliminate nothing. It can transfigure nothing, except by merely lifting it bodily from the plane of existence and exhibiting it, not as a present lure or as a disaster for some native ambition, but as a comedy or tragedy seen as a whole and liberating the spirit that understands it. In other words, truth is a moral and not an aesthetic good. The possession of it is not free intuition, but knowledge necessary to a man's moral integrity and intellectual peace.'¹² Continuing further Santayana says: 'Every movement of instinctive exploration that discloses truth, thereby discloses also the relativity, limits and fugitiveness of this exploration. It shows life under the form of eternity, which is the form of death. Life thereby becomes an offering, a prayer, a sacrifice offered up to the eternal; and though there may be incense in that sacrifice, there is also blood.'¹³

Truth and beauty liberate us from the flux of existence. But the liberation is different in each case. In the case of beauty it is spontaneous and innocent, but in the case of truth the liberation is achieved with great sacrifice. Here we have to take the fact as it is, without any human bias. It is only seeing the

¹¹ *The Realm of Truth* p. 114.

¹² *Ibid.* p. 115.

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 115.

flux of existence in its formal aspect. But liberation in each case is obtained through intuition which releases essence, truth or beauty. To quote Santayana: 'In sensation, intuition liberates some essence from the obscurity and tangle of fact; from passion it liberates eloquence, poetry and beauty; from the known world it liberates truth.'¹⁴

Truth, though it liberates us from the flux of existence, is relative and subjectively coloured. It expresses the sensations and expectations of a specific animal. This view of truth is different from the ideal complete truth as is demanded by our spirit. Santayana says that we should not confuse between the knowledge of truth and the truth itself. This confusion records the difference between realism and idealism. Too much devotion to ideal truth, which is nothing but a spiritual culture of it, is responsible for the denial of truth in ordinary experience of our lives. But Santayana points out that such ideal truth never exists. We may reflect on such ideal complete truth, but that truth has no existence. We have knowledge of finite truths only. We cannot know them by any of our idealisms. So here also he warns us by saying that such a spiritual culture may be an enjoyment of a spiritual life, but it has nothing to do with the experience of life, and so has no authority to deny our ordinary experience of life given to us by our animal faith. This position of Santayana may be reviewed through his own words: 'Thus among the ancients, so among the moderns, the denial of truth is due to palpable confusions between truth and knowledge of truth, between essence and existence, between the ideal and the actual.'¹⁵

This is rendered still more clear in the following expressions of the author him-

self: 'The truth, for the psyche, remains always an imposition. Sometimes she bows to it suddenly, sometimes she rebels against it, and angrily maintains that her radical feelings are much more to be trusted. In her happiest moments she forgets the quarrel, and builds with all the materials that experience has given her, a world of her own not too false to live with for a while, and so true as to check her animal joy in living. She is an artist, and her world must have the truth and the falsity of art.'¹⁶

The creation of such an ideal world of truth is good in its own sphere, it is an elevation of our spiritual life no doubt, but it is scientifically false and morally fanatical. So the truth to have any validity must have reference to its own home, the animal world. In this sense our animal faith and truth are allied. So says Santayana in very emphatic words: 'Truth is thus a household presence: not the naked truth nor the divine truth, but truth disguised as a domestic and dressed in homespun. Not to recognize such conventional truths in the home orbit would be idiocy, and to contradict them would be madness.'¹⁷ This is the realistic view of truth that we find in the evolutionary world-view of Santayana. This rational scepticism with regard to knowledge and truth is maintained throughout in his *Scepticism and Animal Faith*. So truth, in its realistic aspect, must be subjected to the animal faith. Therein lies true rationality. So there is a difference between the culture of truth from the side of our spiritual life, and the knowledge of truth that we obtain in our daily life. The life of ideation and the life of impulse must not be confused with each other. This is the essential note of the philosophy of Santayana.

¹ *The Realm of Truth* pp. 117-118.

² *Ibid.* p. 129.

³ *The Realm of Truth* p. 132.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 139.

THE ACTUALS AND THE SURVIVALS OF RELIGION

BY CHUNILAL MITRA, M.A., B.T.

Though there are many established historical religions in the world, there is only one universal religion, i.e. the Religion of Man. Consequently we do not agree with those who pronounce that because there is only one true and genuine religion and because there are six, if not more, historical religions in the world, five of them must be false, and, consequently, most men are fools. As a matter of fact, Prof. Charles Ritche, in his *Idiot Man* or *The Follies of Mankind*, has remarked that mankind is not 'Homo Sapiens' but 'Homo Stultus,' i.e. not intelligent man but foolish man. But this is going too far.

As to the genesis of religion some hold that it arises out of fear. Worship of the Deity through fear, either of hell-fire or of annihilation, is meant for the beginner and not for the explorer who has secured the passport, i.e. for the really religious man. For such a man just the reverse is the case. For him, the meaning as well as the source of religion is fearlessness within and non-violence without. He is to be fearless in spirit and in thought, and to be non-violent in words and works.

Some hold that the world has outgrown the necessity for religion. But the fact is otherwise. Really speaking, what we have outgrown of is not religion, but the conceit and the vanity of it. For, what is dangerous is not learning or even little learning, if we are conscious of its littleness, but the vanity and the conceit of learning.

A further question might be raised : Would it make the world a better place of habitation if religion were erased

from the face of it altogether? Would it then make life more happy and more secure than it is now? Decidedly not. Religion, undoubtedly, has not made disarmament possible. Nevertheless we can say that it has saved the human race from a worse calamity and a severer disaster.

Perhaps the entire difficulty arises out of a confusion between the two aspects of religion, viz. its temporary value and its lasting worth of much wider importance.

We often ask : To what religion does a person belong? The whole controversy centres round this single query. But the question is faulty. It may be more fitting to enquire what way of life does a man like, than to ask what religion does he adhere to. In the last analysis, what is of momentous import and of fundamental interest is neither the liking nor the adhering but the living—living of a life. Liking and adhering are more concerned with matters political or otherwise, and not with matters spiritual. Living the life of religion conduces to the well-being of society. The Hindu who lives the life of a true Christian, manifesting in life the Christian virtues, is more a Christian than a so-called Christian who merely likes Christianity and labels himself as an adherent; a Mohammedan who lives a Vedic life is more a Hindu, than a Hindu who traditionally belongs to it and merely names himself a Hindu. 'Belonging' is not identical with 'Being.' We may part with our belongings; they are not part and parcel of our life. We can put off our shirts and shoes, we can sell them,

burn them, or exchange them for something else. Religion with men who merely belong to it or adhere to it is a religion of this kind. In truth, they do not belong to it, rather it belongs to them, it is a costume they put on, an article in the possession of which they exhibit pride. Regarding such men we can say, in the words of Sir Radhakrishnan, 'They wish to enjoy the consolations of religion without undergoing the labour of being religious'; or that they are religious not with their whole souls, but with their brains, more frequently with their spinal cords. Swami Vivekananda also observes that religion is never an intellectual assent. 'It is a positive something and not a negative nonsense.' Because, according to him 'Reason leaves us at a point quite indecisive.' We may reason all our lives, but we are incompetent to prove or disprove the facts of religion. Rituals and ceremonies do not survive. They often become worn out, changed, modified, and even die, unless there are living personalities to actualize them. Only the creative personalities survive. They explain religion more than any amount of rituals and conventions.

The truth might be illustrated by a single case. That to-day Vedanta or Hinduism is esteemed by the West is because Swami Vivekananda and the missionaries of the Ramakrishna Order have shown how the life of Vedanta can be lived by fully living it themselves. What the Swami propagated was neither Hinduism nor any other traditional 'ism' but a few creative thoughts that were bound to prevail. In America he appeared as an intellectual facing intellectuals or rather as a whole personality face to face with the combined intelligence of the entire world. In fact, the Swami lived the life of Vedanta and Vedanta was

established there as a consequence. Thus without the living man, the exponent and the harbinger, any particular religion dies away even in the land of its birth. Without such a man to take its hold once again it decays, it fades away.

Taking note of the extant religions of the world, viz. Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Hinduism the truth of the aforesaid proposition may be corroborated.

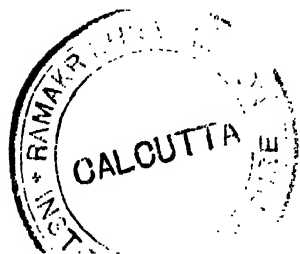
To begin with the last illustration of the list. For a long time the religion of the Brahmos was a living force, and it was prevalent only because a living man was in its head, namely, the Raja Ram Mohan Roy. It was in full swing so long as the Raja lived. Another section of Hinduism is the religion of the Arya Samajists. It was in its full vigour so long as its founder and exponent, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, the 'World force' (as Sri Aurobindo puts it) lived. He was at once a religious reformer, a social uplifter, and a national rejuvenator. He overhauled the Shastras. His dynamic personality, galvanizing spirit, austere saintly character, and unostentatious life supplied the life-force of the Arya Samaj. Again, Sri Ramakrishna was the 'symphony of a hundred different musical elements emanating from the past,' 'the consummation of two thousand years of spiritual life of three hundred millions of people' and an apostle of the spiritual forces of India. Swami Vivekananda is a world-conqueror of our times, because he lived the ideals of religion. We would not properly understand the religion and philosophy of the Ramakrishna Movement if we study Ramakrishna and Vivekananda as parts instead of studying Ramakrishna-Vivekananda as a joint whole. For quite exquisitely has it been said that 'if we look upon

Ramakrishna as the Buddha of our age, Vivekananda was undoubtedly all the great Buddhist preacher-organizers boiled into one personality.'

The religions of the Brahmos, of the Arya Samajists, and of the Vedantins will be revived in all ages if a Ram Mohan, a Dayananda or a Vivekananda comes to the forefront and lives a perfectly religious life. On the contrary, all the religious ideals and beliefs will die in no time, if the rituals and scriptures only live and there is no man to actualize them. Hence it is no use asking 'What religion do you belong to?' if our belongings are with mere rituals, formalities and conventions. For, in the end, religion is never accomplished. It is 'ceaseless action, the will to strive, the outpouring of a stream, never a stagnant pool.'

We have thus two distinct aspects of religion, viz. the formalities or the social settings and the fundamentals. The first are the actuals, the other the survivals of religion. When Swami Vivekananda remarked that 'realization is real religion, all the rest is only preparation,' he virtually meant the same thing. He repeatedly told us that religion does not consist in doctrines or dogmas. 'Not what you read nor what dogmas you believe that is of importance, but what you realize.' Only men like him are exclusively

entitled to say, 'A man may believe in all the churches of the world, he may carry in his head all the sacred books ever written, he may baptize himself in all the rivers of the earth, still if he has no perception of God, I would class him with the rankest atheist.' Thus a substantial distinction between the actuals and the survivals of religion is made—ought to be made—by those who are higher and superior in the scale of being religious. Nay, for the saintly and the godlike such a distinction is of perennial interest and of paramount importance. As the actuals are the constituents of religion and as they just maintain its bare existence, so the survivals maintain its persistence and eternity. One has got the passing value, the other the surviving one. The former speaks for Churchianity, the latter stands for Christianity. That which is of permanent value can only make us real Christians or real Hindus, the sons of the Lord and of the prophets, of the seers and of the sages. The entire trouble in our life is due to our being so-called religious. And here, as elsewhere, we are victims of the common lot of degeneration. Herein also lies the crux of all our dissensions. Quite consistently, true religion is not in the least responsible for any mishaps in any spheres—social or communal, political or religious.



THE TEACHINGS OF ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA

BY WOLFRAM H. KOCH

[Mr. Wolfram H. Koch's article on 'The Life of St. Catherine of Siena' appeared in the *Prabuddha Bharata* of October, 1939. Ed.]

We shall translate a few chosen passages from the letters and from the *Dialogue of Divine Providence*, of St. Catherine, beginning with her vivid realistic description of the touching death-scene of Nicolò da Tuldo.

THE DEATH OF NICOLÒ DA TULDO

In a letter to Brother Raimondo da Capua, St. Catherine gives a detailed account of this tragic episode. She says :

'Up, up, my sweet Father, let us sleep no more. For I hear such news that I wish no more bed of repose or worldly state. I have just received a head into my hands, which was to me such sweetness as heart cannot think, nor tongue utter, nor eye behold, nor the ear hear. I went to see him you know of whence he received such comfort and consolation that he confessed and disposed himself very excellently. And he made me promise for the love of God that when the time of the sentence had arrived I would be with him. And thus I promised and did. Then in the morning before the bell rang I went to him. I led him to hear Mass. And he received Holy Communion which he had never before received. His will was conformed and subjected to the will of God, and only a certain fear had remained that he might not be strong at the last moment. But the immeasurable and kindling goodness of God deceived him and created in him such affection and love in the desire for God that he knew not how to abide without Him, saying,

"Remain with me and abandon me not. And thus I shall not be other than well, and I die content." And he held his head upon my breast. And I then felt a jubilation and breathed the fragrance of his blood, and this was not without the fragrance of mine which I desire to pour out for the sweet Bridegroom Christ. And as the desire of my soul was increasing, and I felt his fear, I said, "Be comforted, my Brother sweet, for soon we shall arrive at the Wedding Feast. Thou shalt go there bathed in the sweet blood of the Son of God, with the sweet name of Jesus, which I desire never to leave thy memory. And I shall wait for thee at the Place of Judgement."

'Now imagine, Father dear and Son, that his heart lost all fear, and his face changed from sadness to joy, and he felt great gladness and exulted and said, "Whence comes such grace to me that the sweetness of my soul will wait for me at the holy place of judgement?" See, he had reached such light that he began to call the place of judgement "holy." And he said, "I shall go there wholly joyous and strong, thinking that thou wilt wait for me there." And he spoke words so sweet as to break one's heart, of the goodness of God.

'Thus I waited for him at the place of judgement in continual prayer and in the presence of Mary and of Catherine the Virgin and Martyr. But before I attained her, I bent down and put my neck on the block. And then I prayed and said, "Mary, I wish this grace that at the moment of death Thou mayest

give him a light and a peace in his heart, and that I should then see him reach his goal." And then my soul was filled to overflowing because of the sweet promise given me, so that in spite of the great multitude of people I did not perceive a single creature. Then he came like a gentle lamb. And when he saw me he began to smile and asked me to bless him with the sign of the Cross. And when he had received that sign, I said, "Up, to the nuptials, my sweet Brother. For soon thou shalt be in life everlasting." He laid himself down with great meekness, and I arranged his neck on the block, and bent down and recalled to him the Blood of the Lamb. His lips said naught save "Jesus and Catherine." And while he was saying this, I received his head into my hands, closing my eyes in the Divine Goodness and saying, "I am willing!"

'And then I beheld God-and-Man as if I beheld the clearness of the sun, and He received his blood and with his blood a fire of holy desire hidden in the soul out of His grace. This He received into the fire of His Divine Charity. And when He had received his blood and his desire, He also received his soul which He put into the open treasure-house of His side full of mercy, the Primal Truth showing that it was out of grace and compassion that He received it, and not for any work's sake. Oh, how sweet and inestimable was it to behold this goodness of God! With what a sweetness and love He waited for that soul parted from the body! He turned the countenance of compassion towards him, when he came to enter His side bathed in his own blood which stood for the blood of the Son of God. Thus He made him participate in the crucified love with which He received painful and shameful death from obedience to the Father for the benefit of human nature and all genera-

tions. And the hands of the Holy Ghost held him fast.

'But he made so sweet a gesture as to draw thousands of hearts. And I am not surprised, for he was already tasting Divine Sweetness. He turned as the bride does when she has come to the threshold of her bridegroom, who turns her eye and head back saluting those who accompanied her, and showing by this act the signs of gratitude.

'When everything was over, his soul rested in peace and quietude, in so strong a fragrance of blood that I could not bear to remove the blood that had dropped on me from him.

'Oh, miserable me! I do not want to say more. I remained on earth with great envy. And it seems to me that the first stone is already laid. So do not be surprised if I impress upon you nothing save to see yourselves drowned in the blood and flame which flows from the side of the Son of God. Now no more carelessness and negligence, my sweetest children, for the blood begins to flow and to receive life. Sweet Jesus, Jesus Love.'

The style of St. Catherine of Siena is very typical of her and clearly shows all the passionateness of her nature. In many cases language proved too inelastic to express all she wanted to express in her most exalted moments, a fact all mystics had to realize when trying to express the ever-inexpressible to those who had not experienced their states of Divine Communion and Union with God. The modern reader may feel shocked by the exultation Catherine seems to feel at the sight of blood, but what she really saw and what to her was everything was the redemption of Nicolò da Tolentino from all bitterness and despondency through Christ, and the beauty of his courageous death which in spite of its terrible injustice was not able to kill the love of and desire for

God in his heart. All her life this death-scene remained indelibly engraved on her heart not as something gruesome but as the glorious victory of the spirit over the flesh, and all her life she felt glad at the service she had rendered the young man during the last hours of his life, a service which no one but she could have rendered. It was the hand of a great lover of God opening the door of higher life to a redeemed soul which otherwise might have been lost in its desperation and doubt.

THE DANGER OF HALF-HEARTEDNESS AND ATTACHMENT

In another letter, to Stefano di Corrado Maconi, St. Catherine speaks about half-heartedness which she abhorred :

‘Dear Son in Christ sweet Jesus,

I, Catherine, servant and slave of the servants of Jesus Christ, write to thee in His precious blood in the desire to see thee lifted up from the lukewarmness of thy heart, so that thou mayest not be vomited by the mouth of God, hearing the reproach : Cursed be the half-hearted. This half-heartedness comes from ingratitude, which ingratitude arises from a faint light that does not let us see the agonizing and consummated love of Christ Crucified, and the infinite benefits received from Him. For in truth did we but behold them, our heart would be aflame with the agonizing fire of love, and we should become chary of time, using it all with great zeal, in honour of God and for the salvation of souls. And it is to this zeal that I am inviting thee, Dear Son, so that thou mayest again set to work.

‘Be thou fervent and not tepid in stimulating thy brethren and the elders to do all they may in the affairs of which I write. If you but were what you should be, you would inflame the

whole of Italy, not only your own house.

‘I do not say anything more to thee. Abide in the holy and sweet delectation of Christ: Comfort thy brethren, and be comforted by them. All are waiting for thee. Sweet Jesus, Jesus Love.’

In a beautiful letter, full of deep insight into the finer working of worldly attractions on the human soul, written to Monna Biancina, wife of Giovanni d’Agnolino Salimbeni, St. Catherine speaks about God and the grave danger of our inordinate and indiscriminate affection for the things of the world and for material comfort. She writes :

‘Dearest Mother in Christ sweet Jesus,

I, Catherine, slave and servant of the servants of Jesus Christ, write to you in His precious blood in the desire to see your heart and your affection emptied of the world and of yourself. For in no other way can you attire yourself in Christ Jesus Crucified, the world having no conformity with God. The inordinate affection of the world loves pride, and God loves humility. It seeks honours, station and greatness, and Blessed God despises them, embracing shame, scorn, disgrace, insult, hunger, thirst, cold and heat even to the shameful death on the Cross. With this death He rendered honour to the Father, and we were all reinstated in grace. The world seeks to please creatures, not minding if it displeases the Creator. He sought but to fulfil the obedience to the Eternal Father for our salvation. He embraced voluntary poverty and was clothed in it, but the world seeks great riches. Thus very different is the one from the other, and so the heart which is empty of God must of necessity be full of the world. Our Saviour said, “No one can serve two masters. If he serves one, he displeases the other.” Thus we must withdraw our heart and affection from this

tyrant the world with great care and solicitude and lay it wholly free and unencumbered before God without any intermediary, and we must not love Him with any feigned zeal. For He is our sweet God who holds His eye over us and looks into the hidden secret of our heart.

‘Our futility and madness have really gone too far, although we see that God sees us and is a just judge who punishes all guilt and rewards all goodness. We live on blinded without fear, waiting for that which we possess already, but never being sure of having it. And we go on always clinging and forming attachments. If God cuts off one of the branches we cling to, we seize another. We feel greater anxiety lest we should lose these transitory things which pass like the wind, as well as creatures than we feel any fear of losing God. All this comes from the inordinate love which we cherish, having them and holding them outside the will of God. In this life we pay the earnest of Hell, for God has ordained that he who loves inordinately shall become unbearable to himself. War always rages both in his soul and body. He is troubled by what he possesses from fear of losing it. And in order to keep it, so that it may not decrease, he tires himself out day and night. And he feels pain for what he does not possess, but craves to possess. And never does his soul find rest in these things of the world, for they are all less than he himself is. They are made for us, but not we for them. We are made for God that we may taste His highest and eternal Good.

‘So God alone can satisfy the soul. In Him does it become pacified, in Him does it repose itself. For there is no thing it can want or desire which it cannot find in God. Finding Him it does not matter that the soul finds no wisdom in itself for it knows at least

how to give up its will to Him who in return longs to give the things which are useful for its salvation. And we feel certain of this. For He does not give only if we ask, but He gave even before we were, for without our asking Him to do so He created us in His image and recreated us again in the blood of His Son. So the soul finds peace in Him, and not in anything else, He being the highest riches, the highest might, the highest goodness and the highest beauty. He is an inestimable good, for there is none who can estimate His goodness, His greatness and His delight; He alone can understand Himself and can appreciate Himself. Therefore I do not want us to sleep on and on, but let us awake from our slumber, Dearest Mother! He is able and knows how to satisfy and fulfil the holy desires of him who wishes to empty himself of the world and to invest himself with His attributes. Ceaselessly we are approaching death. I desire that you hold all temporal, transitory things and creatures as lent to you, using, loving and possessing them, but never as your very own. In this way you may have affection for them, but in no other way. Have it if it is convenient, but let us participate in the fruit of the blood of the Crucified Christ. Considering this, that there is no other way, I said that I desired to see your heart and your affection thoroughly drained of the world and of creatures, and it seems to me that God is continually inciting you thereto. I do not say anything more. Remain in the holy and sweet delectation of God. Sweet Jesus, Jesus Love.’

In the *Dialogue of Divine Providence* (Dialogo della Divina Provvidenza) there is another fine passage speaking about half-heartedness and attachment which fits in very well with the contents of the above letter.

"There are people who travel with so great a half-heartedness that they frequently turn back, for when they almost reach the shore, they are again tossed about on the waves of the tempestuous sea of life full of gloom, as soon as contrary winds arise. If the wind of prosperity arises, they at once turn back their eyes to worldly delights with inordinate pleasure. And when the wind of adversity comes, they turn back through impatience, for they do not hate their fault because of the insult done to Me but only out of fear of punishment. Every thing of virtue requires perseverance, and if one does not persevere, one does not acquire real love for one's desire, that is, does not reach the goal for which one has set out. This goal can never be reached if one does not persevere. That is why perseverance in the wish to fulfil one's desires is needed. I told thee that those people turn back because of the different movements that arise in them or come to them from outside, either when their own sensuality fights against the spirit, or when attached by creatures to an inordinate love which excludes Me, or from impatience, or because of insults received by them. Sometimes this also happens because of self-abasement which makes one say, "This good thou hast done does not avail thee because of thy sins and defects." This makes one turn back and give up the little practice one had entered on.

"It also happens through pleasure, so that the hope which they cherish for My compassionateness, allows them to say, "Why should we tire ourselves out? Enjoy this life and at the end of life thou wilt be received with compassion." In this way their demon makes them lose the fear with which they had begun.

"For all these and many other reasons they turn back their heads and

are neither constant nor persevering. And all this happens because the root of their self-love is not cut away, and so they are not persevering, but await My compassion, ignorantly and in great presumption. And being presumptuous, they hope for My compassionateness, though it is continually being offended by them.

"I told thee that the devil invites men to the dead waters, that is, to those which belong to him, blinding them with delights and worldly station. With the hook of delight he catches them under the colour of good, for he could not catch them in any other way as they would not allow themselves to be caught unless they found some delight or good of their own, for the soul by its very nature always yearns for some good.

"But it is true that the soul blinded by self-love, has neither knowledge nor discrimination of what is true good and of what is of use to the soul and the body. And so the devil, iniquitous as he is, and seeing that the soul is blinded through its own sensuous love, attaches to the soul the different and various defects, colouring them with the appearance of some usefulness or some good. And to everyone he gives according to his station and to his principal vices, wherever he sees him to be most susceptible or receptive. He gives different things to the worldling, to the religious, to the prelates, to the lords, but to all he gives according to the various stations they occupy in life."

In all her writings St. Catherine of Siena again and again fights what she considers the great vices of man: viz. incontinence, avarice, self-love and pride. According to her, incontinence and all forms of carnal desire completely veil the discriminative faculty of man and take away his higher intelligence making him thereby become like a pig, forcing his body and mind to wallow

lasciviously in the mire of lust, rape and voluptuousness, as pigs do in mud and filth.

Avarice is like a mole undermining the fertile ground and eating up the tender roots of higher aspiration, so that the soul becomes the slave of riches and gold. And thus it eventually breeds murder, injustice, cruelty, and the lust of power.

Pride generates hypocrisy of all sorts, making men profess one thing with their mouths and cherishing quite another in the hidden depths of their hearts. It hides truth and speaks falsehood. It is a detestable worm which quietly gnaws away all one's own good as well as that of others.

But the very fact that no worldly man addicted to these vices can bear the truly spiritual virtues of the soul, but constantly tries to annihilate them in others by open or clandestine persecution, gives them greater strength in the sincere devotee. And as there can be no true virtue without its effects on our fellow beings, all these obstacles placed in the path by the worldly-minded serve but to heighten the love and dedication to others of the really spiritually minded person, a truth so beautifully expressed by Sri Ramakrishna when he says that the hereditary agriculturist does not leave off tilling the soil though it may not rain for twelve consecutive years; while those who do not strictly belong to that class but take to agriculture in the hope of making large profits, are discouraged by one season of drought.

In the following quotations the reader may get a glimpse of St. Catherine's feeling and ideas on self-love as the very basis of all unspiritual tendencies and of every failure in spiritual life

THE EVIL OF SELF-LOVE

'Thou knowest that every evil has its roots in the love of oneself, which love

is a cloud that takes away the light of reason, which reason holds in itself the light of faith. And one cannot lose the one without the other.

'I created the soul in My image and likeness, giving it memory, intellect and will. The intellect is the noblest part of the soul. This intellect is moved by affection and it again nourishes affection. And the hand of love, that is affection, fills memory with remembrance of Me and of the benefits it has received. This memory makes it solicitous and not careless, grateful and not ungrateful, so that one power helps the other, and thus the soul is nourished in the life of grace.

'The soul cannot live without love, but always wishes to love something, because it is made of love, for I created it out of love and for love. That is why I told thee that affection moves the intellect, almost saying, "I want to love, because the food I nourish myself with is love." Then the intellect awakened by affection gets up and says, as it were, "If thou wishest to love, I give thee that which thou mayest love." And it rises at once and speculates on the dignity of the soul and the indignity into which it has fallen through its own fault. In the dignity of being, it tastes My inestimable uncreated goodness and the charity with which I created it. And in seeing its misery, it finds and tastes My compassionateness, for out of compassion I have lent it time and drawn it out of darkness.

'I already told thee that the delights of the world without Me are all thorns full of poison, so that the intellect is deceived in its sight and the will in its love—loving that which it ought not to love—and the memory in remembering. The intellect acts like the thief who robs what belongs to others, and thus memory continually remembers those things which are outside of Myself,

and in this way the soul deprives itself of grace.

'Thou seest wherefrom comes imperfection and wherefrom perfection, and how great is the deceit the soul receives in itself, because the root of self-love is not destroyed.

'In whatever state or station man may be, he needs must kill this self-love in himself.

'There are two goals, vice and virtue, and each of them requires perseverance. If thou really wishest to reach life, thou needs must persevere in virtue, and he who wishes to reach eternal death, should persevere in vice. Thus through perseverance one reaches Me who am Life, and also the devil, and tastes the dead waters.

'No one who is born into this life passes through it without bodily or mental troubles. My servants bear them bodily, but mentally they are free. That is, they do not feel the pain of the trouble, for their will is in tune with Mine, and it is only the will that causes pain to man. Those bear pain of body and pain of mind who, as I told thee, taste the earnest of Hell in this life, as My servants taste the earnest of Eternal Life.

'Thou knowest that My Truth spoke the truth when It said, "Whoever shall love Me will be one with Me," and so, following this truth, you will be united in It in a deep affection. And being united in It, you are united in Me, for We are but one thing. And thus do I manifest Myself to you, because We are one and the same. So when My Truth spoke, "I shall manifest Myself to you," It spoke the truth, for manifesting Itself, It manifested Me, and manifesting Me, It manifested Itself.'

There is an austere sweetness and stateliness in St. Catherine's letters and

writings, whose almost imperceptible charm is felt more and more as the reader ponders over her words. She wielded the language with so great a mastery, shaping and reshaping it till it was moulded to express her innermost thoughts and feelings, that she must be counted among the great Classics of Italy. The terseness and forcefulness of some of her finest letters have scarcely ever been equalled, and never so by the conventional, insipid, devotional treatises and manuals of her countrymen and women of that time.

May the reader, in spite of the fragmentary character of this paper, catch at least some flashes of her great and undaunted spirit of consecration in these present times of reckless self-aggrandizement and ruthlessness, individual and national.

Humanity ever had to relearn but this one great lesson of Love and Self-forgetfulness, of Charity instead of Hatred, and it has still to learn it notwithstanding all the great god-men and truly illumined minds that have arisen in all races and peoples throughout the ages: that disinterested love without which man remains a swaggering megalomaniac, a rather undeveloped preying anthropoid ape with all his uncurbed instincts of lust, rape and theft, damned by his own perversity to unspeakable suffering and endless, ever-recurring frustration.

Here and there a cotter's babe is royal-born by right divine;

Here and there my lord is lower than his oxen or his swine.

Chaos, Cosmos! Cosmos, Chaos! once again the sickening game;

Freedom, free to slay herself, and dying while they shout her name.

—Tennyson

THE URGE OF THE HOUR

BY NICHOLAS ROERICH

The call for culture is the most imperative urge of the hour. During the very time when the dark, uncultured forces acutely resent everything which reminds them of the existence of that culture which they so despise, other elements, desiring to identify themselves in some manner with the movements of culture, begin to imitate whatever has already expressed itself in life. A limited mentality is often wrathful at imitation and simulation; but this is precisely unworthy of the realization of culture. On the contrary, it is necessary to rejoice at each evidence of simulation and imitation. Permit all kinds of centres to grow. Some may be enriched with money; others grow through a deepened consciousness and fire of heart; let each one progress accordingly, if only they avoid deadening limitation.

It is not simulation and imitation which are terrible, and which we can notice and over which we can rejoice. Terrible are the breeding places of ignorance where the pronouncement of the word 'Culture' is forbidden—where, because of the limitations of the mind, it is desired to destroy all who think and express culture. It is sad that there are still existent these fossilized monsters of a pre-historic epoch, who try to harm culture as well as those who are its representatives. To our sorrow, we have evidence that such dark forces still exist. And not only do they vegetate, under cover of their casually acquired social positions, but they even attempt to style themselves as the voice of the public, thus indicting

humanity with the heinous and unjust stigma of ignorance.

The voice of the people is the expression of the people's consciousness. In its substance, this consciousness is always progressive, because all civilization has been created precisely through its offices. Of course, under the term 'People's consciousness' we do not refer to a quantitative thing; it is expressed through quality and through the minority. But such a minority seemingly appears as the hidden potentiality of mankind and therefore these leaders, this sacred legion of heroes, must be verily regarded as the treasure of the people. For it is these bearers of its pan-human heart-felt wishes that the people's consciousness in due time, always puts forward and leans upon in the hour of difficulty.

Special signs exist of these foci of heart-felt thought of the people. The dark forces, which fundamentally spread disunion and destruction, and a return to chaos, are especially wrathful at the glowing manifestation of light. The stake of Joan of Arc; the guillotine of Lavoisier; the burning of Giordano Bruno; the martyrdom of Hypatia, and all other countless evidences of the inexplicable wrath against the heroes of culture, appear to us as the contemporaneous signs of recognition by the dark forces of that which threatens their dusky kingdom with destruction.

It is time for us to have lists not only of the friends of culture but also of its enemies. For history, the oblivion of these does not sufficiently transmit the picture of the true circum-

stance of things. It is not necessary to be aware of their array of forces. Unexpectedly there will appear among them names eminent in the various branches of life. Such information will facilitate the precision of future historical writings. It is useful that history has preserved the name of the destructive Herostratus.

Without risking to fall into truisms of sentimentality, we must admit that the present upheavals threaten destruction to all cultural concepts. It is a sad fact that a general financial and economic crisis is commonly reflected first upon the entire domain of education. The people fear to lessen or do away with the manufacturing of poisonous gases, but with distinct ease they are ready to close educational institutions or, at least, to reduce the salaries of the much-tried worker in education. One may quote many of the saddest instances in human history, where the numbers of the unemployed and starving grew enormously while at the same time, the precious seed was destroyed and the ingress to national riches was closed through fear of over-production. Yet over-production itself is no more than a sign of petty thinking and lack of observation. But conventional standards are so greatly shaken that even the Golden Calf, the Valuta of Gold, is wiped away without the substitution of some other conditional sign. The shaking of such a stronghold of convention as gold, only indicates the degree of obsessed agitation and confusion.

It is precisely now, notwithstanding all the assaults of the dark forces, that the thinking circles of humanity must hurriedly turn towards the realization of culture. This is not the time for the

workers and the questors for culture to acknowledge any barriers between themselves. This is not the time for dogmatic discussions, for rivalries, for quarrels behind each other's backs. This is the time when there must be hurried building, construction, assembling of anything which, if only partially and imperfectly, can already think and act in the name of culture. It is necessary to forget all the rudeness, the kicks and conflicts. Why to think of such!

It is necessary to hasten with all means in substituting the ragged standards with vital and unwithering foundations of creativeness and of high quality. It is sad to see how at times those who might think in accord, often seek to resurrect the memories of dead malicious offences and contentions. He who in himself finds the spiritual force to forget all pettiness and discomfort for the sake of general construction shall thereby express the most vital need of the present hour.

The necessities of our life, which at times could have been expressed in terms of years, now in their acceleration must be measured by a day or even an hour. In the same swift way must be measured also the striving towards the unification of all those who can think of culture; who dream not of obstructions but who feel inwardly the potentiality of applying this creative thought in action, without fearing all the bovine derision, the venomous darts and the cudgels of contemporary barbarians.

Hence, he who within himself finds the strength of construction and of unification shall express the urge of the hour.

SWAMI TURIYANANDA

(Continued from the previous issue)

BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

Swami Turiyananda reached New York towards the end of August 1899, via England, along with Swami Vivekananda. Swami Turiyananda worked at first at the Vedanta Society of New York and then he took up the additional work at Mont Clair—a country town, about an hour's journey from New York. Both at New York and Mont Clair, the Swami made himself beloved of all. Swami Turiyananda carried the Indian atmosphere about him wherever he went. When he came to America, he said to Swami Vivekananda that platform work was not in his temperament. At this Swami Vivekananda told him that if he lived the life that would be enough. Yes, Swami Turiyananda lived the life. Intensely meditative, gentle, quiet, unconcerned about the things of the world, Swami Turiyananda was a fire of spirituality. His very presence was a superb inspiration. He did not care much for public work and organization. He was for the few, not for big crowds. His work was with the individual—character-building. And the greatest scope for work in this line he got when he lived with a group of students in Shanti Ashrama, at California.

A Vedanta student of New York, feeling the great need of a Vedanta retreat in the West, where the students could live like Indian Sannyasins, offered to Swami Vivekananda a homestead in California—160 acres of free government land—situated in San Antonio Valley about fifty miles from

the nearest railway station and market. The place was naturally very solitary and in addition it commanded a very beautiful scenery. Far far away from human habitation the place stretched out in a rolling, hilly country. Oak, pine, chaparval, chamisal and manzanita covered part of the land, the other part was flat and covered with grass. Swami Vivekananda accepted the gift and sent Swami Turiyananda to open an Ashrama there. Swami Turiyananda came and started what was to be known as Shanti Ashrama.

From New York Swami Turiyananda went first to Los Angeles and stayed there for a short while. Teaching and talking and holding classes, the Swami became an influence in Los Angeles. But he could not stay there in spite of the earnest entreaties of the students, for he came for some other work. From Los Angeles he went to San Francisco, and stayed there for some time before he actually started for the Shanti Ashrama. It was at San Francisco that Swami Vivekananda told the students, 'I have only talked, but I shall send you one of my brethren who will show you how to live what I have taught.' The students eagerly longed for the coming of the Swami about whom Swami Vivekananda spoke so highly, and naturally they expected much from him. Their expectation was more than fulfilled, for in Swami Turiyananda they found a living embodiment of Vedanta. During his short stay at San Francisco Swami Turiyananda gave a great impetus to

the students who had formed into The Vedanta Society of San Francisco.

With the first batch of a dozen students Swami Turiyananda one day left San Francisco for his future work at the San Antonio Valley. When the party arrived there, many initial difficulties presented themselves. Except one old log cabin, there was no shelter. Water had to be brought from a long distance. But the enthusiasm of the students at the prospect of a future Ashrama was unbounded. Gradually things came into shape. Tents were pitched, a well was dug and a meditation cabin was erected. Though the students were accustomed to the comforts of city life—some of them bred up in wealth and luxury—they all braved any difficulty that came in the way. Soon they were in a position to devote their individual attention to spiritual practices.

At this place Swami Turiyananda lived in one of his most intense spiritual moods—day and night talking only of God and the Divine Mother and allowing no secular thought to disturb the atmosphere of the Ashrama. The mind of the students was constantly kept in a high pitch—through classes in meditation, the study of scriptures, and so on. With the Swami there was no special time for instruction. He was always in such an exalted mood, that to any topic he would spontaneously—and unconsciously as it were—give a spiritual turn. There was no set of definite rules for the Ashrama, but the very life of the Swami was so very inspiring, that everything in the Ashrama went on in an orderly and systematic way. Once a student actually asked the Swami to formulate a set of rules and regulations. 'Why do you want rules?' the Swami said, 'Is not everything going on nicely and well without formal rules? Don't

you see how punctual everyone is, how regular we all are? The Divine Mother has made Her own rules, let us be satisfied with that. We have no organization but see how organized we are. This is the highest organization; it is based on spiritual laws.'

In later days it was found that his method of chastisement was unique. He had a very loving heart, but usually he would keep his emotions under control and not give a free play to them. As such a little reserved and apathetic attitude on his part helped to set right the delinquent. Once to a young monk, who was laughing loudly to the disturbance of others in an Ashrama in India, the Swami said by way of reproof: 'Well, have you realized God, have you attained the life's goal, that you can give yourself up so whole-heartedly to laughter?' A man of God as he was, he could not but talk in that strain even in chastisement. Once interrogated by a curious student as to how men and women of pronounced and different temperaments were living so peacefully together in the Shanti Ashrama, the Swami said: 'As long as we remain true to the Mother, there is no fear that anything will go wrong. But the moment we forget Her, there will be great danger. Therefore I always ask you to think of Mother.'

In those days the word 'Mother' was constantly on his lips. 'Mother tells me to do this,' or 'Mother wants me to tell you that.' The Swami felt that the Divine Mother was guiding him in every way, that She was directing all his actions, even his speech. Referring to this period, he once remarked, 'I could palpably see how Mother was directing even each single footfall of mine.'

At times fiery exhortations came from the Swami to the students, to

make God-realization the only aim of life. 'Clench your fists and say: I will conquer! Now or never—make that your motto, even in this life I must see God,' the Swami would exhort, 'That is the only way. Never postpone. What you know to be right, do that and do that at once, do not let any chance go by. The way to failure is paved with good intentions. That will not do. Remember, this life is for the strong, the persevering: the weak go to the wall. And always be on your guard. Never give in.' And as these words would come not from his lips, but from the very depth of his heart, and as his own life was the visible example of these instructions, the effect was tremendous. The students forgot, as it were, the whole world, their past associations and lived in intense longing for God, and the new-comers would unconsciously fall in that atmosphere.

Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'If a cobra bites a man, its poison will have sure effect; in the same way, if a man comes in contact with a really spiritual person, his life is sure to be changed.' Those who came in touch with Swami Turiyananda or received training under him, were transformed—metamorphosed. In America as well as in India many are the persons whose outlook on life entirely changed because of the influence of the Swami. Afterwards Swami Turiyananda used to say, 'If I can put a single life in the path of God, I shall deem my work a success.' Certainly the number of persons whose thoughts turned godwards, because of the living example of the Swami, are many. A student who was with Swami Turiyananda at the Shanti Ashrama, writes: 'To think of Swami Turiyananda is an act of purification of the mind; to remember his life, an impulse to new endeavour.'

But to transform lives is not an easy task. Especially to change the outlook of those who are brought up in a different culture and tradition and are born with diverse momenta of past lives is an arduous work. As such Swami Turiyananda had a very strenuous life of it at the Shanti Ashrama—so much so that his health broke down within a short period of two years.

Swami Turiyananda badly required a change for his health. It was, therefore, decided that he should come to India, at least for a visit, specially as he was very eager to see the leader—Swami Vivekananda. But before he reached Calcutta, the tragic news reached him that Swami Vivekananda had passed away. This news gave him such a great shock that a few days after he had arrived at Belur Math, he again started for North India to pass his days in Tapasya. For about eight years he practised severe spiritual practices—living sometimes at Brindaban, sometimes at Garhmukteswar in Dt. Bulandshaher, and again at Nagal, some sixty miles down Hardwar. Except at Brindaban, he lived alone and begged his food, though his health was indifferent and he needed help. A Brahmacharin went to serve him at Nagal, but the Swami would not allow him to do so, saying, 'Ganges water is my medicine and Narayana is my doctor!' While at Brindaban he was joined by Swami Brahmananda, the then President of the Ramakrishna Mission, who took temporary leave from work for Tapasya, and they both lived together performing intense spiritual practices.

After coming from America, he no longer engaged himself in any active work, excepting that with the co-operation of Swami Shivananda, one of his Gurubhais, he built an Ashrama at

Almora. Even there the Ashrama grew as a by-product, as they stayed there only to perform Tapasya. For a short period he stayed at the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati. During his stay here he would hold scripture classes and render help in the matter of editing the writings and speeches of Swami Vivekananda.

As a result of severe austerities his health was being undermined. But still he would not desist. His motto was: 'Let pain and body look to themselves, but you, my mind, rest in the contemplation of God.' In 1910, when he was seriously ill, the authorities of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama at Kankhal anyhow persuaded him to go to the Sevashrama, where he was treated and taken care of.

About the year 1911 he developed symptoms of diabetes, which began to increase gradually. As a result of this, he got a carbuncle on his back, for which he had to undergo operations several times. Strange to say, in none of the operations he allowed himself to be put under chloroform, and the surgeons themselves wondered at such a thing. He had the wonderful capacity to dissociate his mind from the body-idea, and so he would not feel the necessity of any chloroform. But he had also extraordinary fortitude as well as living faith in God. So it was easy for him to bear any amount of bodily suffering. Once, when he had an eye-complaint, nitric acid was applied to the eye through mistake. When the mistake was found out and everybody got alarmed, he simply smiled and said, 'It is the will of the Mother.' Fortunately the eye was saved.

The last three years and a half of his life he spent at the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama at Benares, where he passed away on the 21st of July 1922.

The manner of one's death often

indicates the life one has lived. Swami Turiyananda's death was as wonderful as his life was exemplary. The day before his passing, the Swami said all of a sudden, 'To-morrow the last day. To-morrow the last day.' But none could realize the meaning of these words just then. Next morning when Swami Akhandananda, one of his brother disciples came to see him, Swami Turiyananda said to him, 'We belong to the Mother and the Mother is ours. Repeat, repeat!' This he himself repeated a number of times. He then made obeisance to the Divine Mother reciting the well-known Mantram beginning with सर्वमंगलमंगल्ये (salutation to the Divine Mother—the source of all beneficence and bliss). This he repeated in the noon and also in the afternoon.

In the afternoon he insisted on being helped to sit in a meditative posture. But as his strength gave way, he could not remain sitting; and much against his wishes he was made to lie down in bed. Then he said, 'The body is falling off—the Pranas are departing. Make the legs straight, and raise my hands.' The hands being raised, he folded them, and made repeated salutations uttering the name of the Master. And then he suddenly spoke out as if realizing Brahman in everything, 'This creation is Truth (सत्य). This world is Truth. All is Truth. Prana is established in Truth.' Then he recited the Vedic Mantram, सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म । प्रज्ञानमनन्दं ब्रह्म । He asked it to be repeated. And Swami Akhandananda recited it. Hearing this ultimate Truth of the Upanishads, the Swami said, 'That is enough,' and entered into Mahasamadhi. It seemed as though he quietly passed into sleep. Not a sign of pain or distortion was visible on his person. His face became aglow with a divine beauty and an unspeakable blessedness. Those who witnessed the

incident could not but come to the conclusion that life and death for such a soul was like going from one apartment to another. While in physical body Swami Turiyananda felt the living guidance of the Divine Mother so much that one would believe that death simply intensified that feeling in the Swami. The Divine Mother simply called away Her child to Herself from the arena of the world's activities.

Swami Turiyananda began life with a firm belief in the utility of self-exertion, but ended in perfect resignation to the divine will. His self-surrender was, however, no less dynamic than the early impetuosity to storm the citadel of God. These two attitudes may seem contradictory. But the Swami himself explained how they are not. Birds fly about in the infinite sky on and on, till they are tired and weary, when they sit on the mast of a ship for rest. The same is the case with a man who believes in self-exertion. He strives and strives, knocks and knocks, but with every striving his egotism receives a blow till at last it is completely smashed, and he realizes that the Divine Mother is everything. But to reach that ultimate stage one must struggle sincerely and earnestly. There should be no self-deception in spiritual life. Because people forget that surrender to the divine will becomes identified with a drifting life of inertia in the cases of many.

Even in the complete self-effacement of Swami Turiyananda before the Divine Mother, how active he was! Even in his severe illness he was intensely active. His Shanti Ashrama days were a period of very very hard labour. When he would pass his days in Tapasya, he would live an intensive life. He was a man of uncompromising attitude. Whatever he would do, he would apply the whole strength of

his soul to it. One found him always sitting erect—even in his illness, even while on an easy chair, he would never bend his body. This simple physical characteristic represented, as it were, his mental attitude. He was unbending in not allowing Maya to catch him. In his self-exertion as well as in his self-surrender one would find a great spiritual force intensely active in him.

When he was in any of the Ashramas or Maths, he would hold classes or inspire people, through conversation, for a higher life. He was a great conversationalist. But his conversation always was full of great spiritual fervour. In it flowed quotations from the Gita, the Upanishads, Hindi literature, sayings of Tulasidas, Kabir or Nanak. Once asked as to how his conversation was so spontaneous and at the same time of a high level of spiritual intensity, the Swami said: 'Well, from my childhood I have lived that life intensely.'

Not a few would get spiritual impetus in their life through his letters. Not being able to be with him personally, these devotees would have correspondence with him regarding their spiritual difficulties. And the letters the Swami would write in reply would always wield a tremendous influence upon their lives. These letters indicate his clear thinking, vast scholarship, and more than that his spiritual vision. Once asked as to how his answers to the questions became so effective, the Swami said: 'There are two ways of answering a question; one way is to answer from the intellect, the other way is to answer from within. I always try to answer from within.' While answering questions, the Swami would get, as it were, glimpses of the mental state of the questioner. Naturally his answers were like flashes of illumination.

Thus though not actively engaged in any philanthropic work, the life of the Swami was of tremendous influence to many. Swami Turiyananda had a remarkable breadth of vision. In him there was the synthesis of Jnana, Karma, Yoga and Bhakti, and many things more. That was perhaps the main reason why all classes of people were attracted to him. 'He greatly eulogized the Seva work as inaugurated by Swami Vivekananda. Though Swami Turiyananda spent his whole life in intense spiritual practices in the form of meditation and contemplation, he used to say: 'If one serves the sick and the distressed in the right spirit, in one single day one can get the highest spiritual realization.' He had a feeling heart. He felt for the masses of India and encouraged all forms of philanthropic work. He was in close touch with all current events. He took great interest in the movements started

by Mahatma Gandhi and was anxiously hoping that they might bring better days for the sunken millions of India.

His devotional side was very marked. He used to visit shrines as often as he could, and devotional songs always had a telling effect upon him. His chanting of sacred texts on special holy occasions was a thing to enjoy—such a devotional attitude and such perfect intonations one could seldom meet with.

Swami Turiyananda was one of those rare souls whose very birth is a blessing to humanity. But even in their death they leave behind an example whose burning light blazes along far, far into the future. Swami Turiyananda lived a life which is sure to supply inspiration to many even in the time to come.¹

¹ Much of the matter for this article has been got from: *The Life of Sri Ramakrishna* (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati), *With the Swamis in America* by a Western disciple, and *Prabuddha Bhurata* (1922).

(Concluded)

SONNET SEQUENCE TO SRI RAMAKRISHNA

IV

Yearning for Kali, for long sleepless years
On fire with a love that madly flamed toward death,
You wept, until, awakened by Your tears,
Her basalt figure flushed and was with breath,
And bent and blessed You, drawing You inside
A light so soft and poignant of perfume,
You reeled and fell before the shining tide
Of Consciousness that swept the temple room.

Yet when Her gracious Person barred the way
Of Your ascent beyond twin name and form,
No smile of Hers, however sweet, could stay
Your mind's strong sword from cutting through Her charm:
In whom, beside You, can a seeker find
At once such love, such mastery of mind?

--Dorothy Kruger

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE DISINTERESTED LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

Sir S. Radhakrishnan addressing the convocation of the Patna University said that a civilized life was not to be equated with physical strength or material prosperity, political power or commercial success; civilization consisted in the enjoyment of the rarest of man's gifts, the disinterested life of the spirit. He went on to say that it was not possible for us to cultivate the inner life unless we were raised above physical wants and that the importance of this basic principle was understood by those who were working for the better distribution of wealth and the increasing socialization of the State. He further said that the new economic policies and political arrangements attempt to remove the hindrances to good life but could not by themselves make it prevail and that it was in the educational institutions that the youth of a country must be trained to the appreciation of the good life with its fine and delicate perceptions and desire for the things of the spirit.

The above analysis clearly indicates the twofold aspect of the question. The hindrances to good life should be removed and it should be made to prevail. The first part has to be achieved by proper economic policies and political arrangements and the second by the right kind of education. Economic policies, political arrangements and educational programmes should be shaped so as to become efficient instruments of the life of the spirit. Thus we see that physical strength, material prosperity, political power and commercial success

are necessary for the life of the spirit, although all these cannot be equated with it. A superfluity of the worldly riches and power are detrimental to the inner life of the spirit; on the other hand extreme poverty is also equally detrimental.

COMMON LIFE OF WISDOM

The reply given by His Excellency Dr. Tai Chi-Tao, leader of the Chinese Goodwill Mission, to the welcome address presented by Acharya Kripalani on behalf of the Indian National Congress shows how far-reaching is the influence exerted by the early Buddhist Missionaries sent from India to China. In the course of his reply Dr. Tai Chi-Tao said the following:—'Every one in China knows the greatness of Buddhist teachings, and the great country which produced Shakyamuni Buddha. We often congratulate ourselves for having accepted that great religion. The readiness with which people in China accepted the Indian religion and culture shows that the two peoples have something in common. In the term of Buddhist scriptures we both possess the common "Life of Wisdom." Of all the Bodhisatvas, I myself, my family as well as many other people in China worship most Avalokiteshwara, as he appears in white robe and under a white hat, because he is most merciful of all and because he is inclined to emancipate other people by imposing sacrifice on himself. The objective of my mission is to bring the goodwill of my countrymen to the Indian people in general and to the white-coated and white-hatted Congressmen in particular.

Since I arrived, I have observed their lives and behaviour. Their undaunted spirit of self-sacrifice has filled my heart with admiration. On behalf of the

Koumintang, the Nationalist Party in China, I pay my respect to the men in white robe and white hat—the Congressmen.'

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

OUTLINES OF HINDUISM. By T. M. P. MAHADEVAN, M.A., PH.D., Professor of Philosophy, Pachaiyappa's College, Madras, Pp. 128.

Unlike Buddhism, Christianity or Islam, Hinduism is not a founded religion and is not based on the teachings of any historical personage or prophet. It is called the Sanatana or Eternal Religion and is believed to have had no beginning in time. It is not even a single religion but is, as it were, a number of religions rolled into one. The vast body of spiritual thoughts and ideals, ranging from the lowest idea of idolatry to the highest flights of the non-dualistic philosophy of the Vedanta that Hinduism presents, baffles all attempts to comprehend it under a single definition. But this vastness and catholicity constitute both the strong and weak points of its character. It allows each individual infinite scope for the choice of his Ishtam in religious life but at the same time helps the growth of innumerable sects and denominations that are little acquainted with Hinduism as a whole, which fact seems to be responsible for the lack of the feeling of solidarity among the Hindus. So it is imperative that our people should have a clear conception of our religion in all its aspects and should be trained right from their young days to think not only in terms of the particular sects to which they belong but also in terms of Hinduism as a whole. The present book under review fulfils this purpose to a great extent. It is well conceived and will acquaint our young generation, for whom it is meant, with the main outlines of our religion.

The book is divided into six chapters under the following heads: What is Hinduism? Hindu Scriptures, Hindu Rituals, Hindu Ethics, Hindu Sadhanas and Hindu Philosophy. The treatment is very simple and systematic as may be understood from the above titles. Though written for the

Intermediate Classes the book will be of interest even to the general reader. We congratulate the author for the amount of success he has achieved in his noble endeavour.

1. **ESSAYS AND LETTERS.** Pp. 204. Price Rs. 2/-. 2. **LETTERS ON HINDUISM.** Pp. 55. Price Re. 1/-. 3. **RAJMOHAN'S WIFE.** Pp. 100. Price Re. 1/-. ALL BY BANKIM CHANDRA CHATTERJEE. Published by the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta.

Bankim Chandra's name is a household word in Bengal, and there are scores of non-Bengalis in every province who have known him through his famous novels. He was not merely a Bengali novelist, but one of the greatest makers of modern Young Bengal and, therefore, of modern Young India. His writings have greatly contributed to the re-awakening of Indian Nationalism. He brought about a Renaissance in Bengali literature, and though pre-eminently a novelist, he wrote essays and articles on a number of subjects, such as, art, literature, science, history, politics, economics, Hindu religion and philosophy. The books under review, comprising most of Bankim's English writings, clearly show with what facility he could write in that language, keeping, at the same time, all those gems of thought which have made him a great thinker and a master mind.

1. In this volume are collected Bankim's essays and articles, and also letters written in a controversy on Hindu religion as well as private letters of lasting interest. He is little known as an essayist, but his essays deserve to be read with care at the present moment. Seven essays and articles have been reproduced here from various sources. In these we find the harmonious blending of the ancient learning with the modern. Though Bankim was greatly influenced by Western thought, he was capable of pre-

senting his own views in a homely intelligible manner. A few chapters of the novel *Devi Choudhuran*, translated into English by the author himself, have also been included here.

2. Bankim wrote a series of letters to one of his friends, expounding his views on Hinduism. It started as a private controversy, but later on, the author himself, desiring to give it a wider appeal, wrote his letters, more or less in the form of essays. These valuable letters have been collected together in this book. To Bankim Hinduism consisted of the fundamental principles underlying the various denominations of faith professed by the Hindu peoples. In his search after a clear conception of Hinduism, Bankim begins by referring to Hindu legends and then passes on to the dogmatic philosophy that developed out of these legends. Next he takes up Hindu worship, its rites and sacrifices. Obviously the author was unable to give a completeness to this discussion. These letters reveal deep insight, scholarship and liberality. Though he was a true Hindu in every way, yet his radical views are not in agreement with orthodox Hindu thought.

3. This was the first novel written by Bankim Chandra and strangely enough, he happened to do it in English. As the first three chapters of the original could not be found, the learned editors have rendered these portions into English from Bankim's Bengali version of this novel. Bankim Chandra is an expert in character-representation, and this novel has such artistic elements as dramatic situation, lively dialogue, clash of personalities, originality and variety, which make it vivid and interesting.

THE VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY. BY SRIDHAR MAJUMDAR, M.A. *Published by S. N. Bhattacharya, M.A., Professor of Sanskrit, B. N. College, Bankipore. Pp. 480+xiv. Price Rs. 5/- or 10 S.*

This is the second edition of Majumdar's admirable work on the Vedanta-Sutras. The original Sutras are given in Sanskrit; each Sutra is followed by its word-for-word meaning and short explanatory notes. Endeavouring to present an unbiassed interpretation of the Sutras, the author has followed Nimbarkacharya's commentary, in writing his notes. The philosophical view of Nimbarka is peculiarly suited to the modern

taste and 'has a fascination of its own, especially for those who do not care to dive deep into the labyrinth of subtle logical and metaphysical arguments, and yet desire to know what the celebrated system of Vedanta has to teach.' According to Nimbarka Brahman, the world and the souls are all realities and he integrates all the three by his Bhedabhedavada or the theory that the relation of the sentient and insentient world with Brahman is one of difference and non-difference. He regards the Jivas and Prakriti as effects of Brahman. Matter undergoes further modification after creation, but the souls do not, and in this sense the latter are said to be eternal. Mukti results from the realization of 'the true nature of the Spirit,' but even then 'the individuality of the finite self is not dissolved.' The author also gives the views of Shankara wherever there is material difference. In the notes the original references to the Upanishads, Gita and other texts are given along with their English translations. A glossary giving the English equivalents of the technical words used in the Sutras, and an index to Sanskrit quotations and original Sutras, are added at the end of the book.

In this edition the printing and get-up of the book have been much improved, and a valuable introduction by the author has been added, which helps one to better understand his line of thought. The book is divided into sixteen sections and each section is prefaced by a sketch of the subject-matter dealt with therein. Thus it has proved very useful to students of philosophy, and the Calcutta University has rightly included the book in the syllabus for the M. A. Examination. The extremely simple style and lucid exposition will, we hope, make the book easy for the general reader and thus will help to remove the popular misconception that the Brahma-Sutras are abstruse and difficult of understanding.

THE NATURAL CURE OF EYE-DEFECTS. BY DR. L. KAMESWARA SARMA, M.A., N.D. *Published by the Nature-Cure Publishing House, Pudukkottai, S. I. Ry. Pp. 62. Price 8 As. or 1 S.*

Dr. Sarma is a well-known Naturopath and has to his credit many books on the theory and practice of Nature-Cure. He has successfully treated and cured many acute and chronic cases by means of his natural

methods and thus has earned a name for himself. The author has already brought out an interesting treatise on 'Defective Sight,' giving the various causes of defective vision and the practical method of its treatment. The present booklet is written on similar lines and is more exhaustive. It contains plenty of useful information regarding the physiology of the eye, the true cause of eye-defects and the natural cure of eye-defects through regulated diet, performance of such common exercises as palming and swinging, use of sunlight and application of cold baths. It is interesting to note that while glasses cannot restore the sight to normal and surgical treatment involves risk, the natural methods of treatment, as set forth in these pages, is harmless and effects a thorough cure by removing the cause

of the defect. His books on 'Drugless Healing,' 'Practical Nature-Cure,' and 'Fasting Cure' have been well received by and have proved immensely useful to the public. Similarly even this book, which is highly practical and authoritative, is sure to receive wide appreciation.

SRIMAD-BHAGAVAD-GITA. By SWAMI SIVANANDA. *Published by the Divine Life Society, Rikhikesh. Pp. 131+xii.*

It contains the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth chapters of the Gita in original Sanskrit, each verse followed by word-for-word meaning, a running translation, commentary and notes, all in English. It is written in a simple clear style and helps to popularize the teachings of the Gita. The book is meant for free distribution.

NEWS AND REPORTS

BIRTHDAY OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

The birthday of Sri Ramakrishna falls this year on 28 February and the public celebration on 2 March, 1941.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SHISHUMANGAL PRATISHTHAN, CALCUTTA

The Shishumangal Pratishthan is a maternity hospital and child welfare centre of a unique type. It is a nation-building institution which does not stop with the curative services it renders but lays special stress on preventive care.

The report of the Pratishthan for the year 1939 begins with a short history of the rapid growth of the institution from its humble beginning in a rented house in the year 1932. Within six years of its inception the activities grew to such an extent that the accommodation in the rented house proved too insufficient and the need for a bigger and permanent home became very urgent. Accordingly a plot of land was purchased from the Corporation with a borrowed amount of Rs. 45,845/- and a two-storied building was raised on it at a cost of a little over a lac and a half of rupees, of which Rs. 89,000/- was a capital grant from the Government of Bengal. The construction of the building entailed a deficit which also was met by a further loan. The institution was shifted, on the 1st of June

1939, to its beautiful new home accommodating 4 antenatal, 4 gynaecological, 50 maternity and 50 baby beds. The institution will, in due course, branch out in other parts of Calcutta as well as in other distant towns and villages where the need is the greatest.

The authorities of the institution send the year 1939 may be classified under the following heads:

Antenatal Care It means the care of the expectant mother during the period of her pregnancy. Mothers were given instructions in the hygiene of pregnancy, diet, preparation for confinement and care of the infant and the growing child through lectures, pamphlets, posters and individual advice. There are 2 free and 2 paying antenatal beds in the indoor department. The outdoor antenatal care was given free as far as possible. A total number of 6,119 cases was treated during the year under report.

Hospital Confinement: The indoor hospital is meant for those patients who register themselves beforehand for antenatal

care. There are 50 labour beds with an equal number of baby beds and they are divided into three classes, viz. General Ward, Paying Ward and Cabin. There are 21, 21 and 8 beds in them respectively. The beds in the General Ward are reserved for poor patients. 1,140 deliveries took place in the hospital and 9,783 and 7,958 mothers and babies respectively were accommodated and looked after during the year.

Home Confinement : A total number of 140 cases of delivery were attended at home and 3,025 mothers and 2,989 babies were looked after through home-visits.

Treatment of Gynaecological Cases : The Pratishtan registers such cases in the outdoor clinic and has 2 free and 2 paying beds in the indoor department for the treatment and operation of them. 477 cases in all were treated during the year of whom 36

were admitted in the hospital and were cured and discharged.

Postnatal Care and Follow-up of Children from Birth to School-going Age : Every child born under the care of this institution is looked after till the end of the fifth year of his age. 5,887 children were looked after during the year through home-visits and 1,172 were treated in the children's clinics.

Training of Midwives : The institution trains midwives who are given boarding, lodging and stipend for incidental expenses.

The authorities of the Pratishtan send their earnest appeal to the generous public for funds. There are provisions for perpetuating the memory of the near and dear ones by endowing Rs. 2,000/- for a room, or Rs. 5,000/- for a free bed or Rs. 25,000/- for a ward or block. All contributions may be sent to the Secretary of the Pratishtan, 99, Lansdowne Road, Calcutta.

CHICAGO, U. S. A.

The Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Chicago celebrated the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna by holding a banquet in the Hotel Maryland on Sunday, the 5th of May. Guest speakers were Swami Akhilananda of Providence, R.I., Dr. Paul Scherger of St. Paul's Evangelical Church of Chicago, and Prof. Charles Hartshorne of the University of Chicago. Swami Vishwananda, the leader of the Chicago centre, acted as toastmaster.

Swami Akhilananda emphasized in his talk that the crying need in the world to-day is cultivation of the spirit of brotherhood among the different races and religions—the feeling of oneness with all human beings. To bring out the point more vividly the Swami related the incident from the life of Sri Ramakrishna, who, standing one day on the bank of the Ganges, saw two boatmen stand in their boats quarrelling and fighting. Finally, one of them began beating the other mercilessly. Watching them, Sri Ramakrishna felt such deep compassion for the injured man that the marks of the blows appeared upon the Master's body. Swami Akhilananda also dwelt for some time upon the service that Swami Vivekananda rendered by preaching

to the world the doctrine of the divinity of man.

Dr. Scherger, a scholarly student of Hindu scripture, maintained that the contribution of India in the domain of philosophy as embodied in the Vedas and Upanishads is unique.

The closing address was given by Swami Vishwananda, who said:

'Year after year, we invite you in the name of one who brought a message from the unknown and the unknowable. In the age of realism we need idealism, but idealism based solidly on the testimony of human experience.'

The audience was eagerly attentive and very appreciative.

In January 1940 Swami Vishwananda was invited by the Faculty of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago to deliver a lecture on the Harmony of Religions.

On three occasions during the last season the Swami spoke before three different groups of students in the Northwestern University. In the Department of Philosophy he chose the subject, Hindu Metaphysics; Comparative Religions, Spirit of Hinduism; Political Science, and Cultural History of India.

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

SRI RAMAKRISHNA IN ILL HEALTH AND
DR. RAKHAL.

The doctor prescribes a medicine after
which Sri Ramakrishna speaks again.

Sunday, 20th September, 1885

WHY THIS ILLNESS ?

Sri Ramakrishna is sitting with the devotees in his room at Dakshineswar. Navagopal, Haralal, Rakhal, Latu and the Goswami who is an adept in devotional music, are present. Haralal is a teacher in the Hindu School.

Sri Ramakrishna (to the devotees): ‘Well, people say, “If he is such a great Sadhu, why does he then suffer?”’

Tarak : ‘Bhagavandas, the great Vaishnava saint, also did suffer and was laid up in his bed for a long time.’

Sri Ramakrishna : ‘Dr. Madhu, even though he is sixty years old, lives a very corrupt life, but is free from disease.’

Goswami : ‘Yes, revered sir, it is for the sake of others that you suffer. You take upon yourself the sins of those who come to you and your illness is due to this.’

A devotee : ‘You can recover in no time if you pray to the Mother for it.’

M. arrives with Dr. Rakhal of Bowbazar. The doctor has been called to examine the illness of Sri Ramakrishna. He examines the throat of the Master. The doctor is a tall and stout figure with plump fingers.

THE VANISHING EGO

Sri Ramakrishna (with a smile, to the doctor): ‘Your fingers are like those of a wrestler. Mahendra Sarkar also examined me and pressed the tongue so hard that it was paining. He took it, as it were, for the tongue of a cow.’

Sri Ramakrishna : ‘I cannot pray for the recovery of this body. Moreover, nowadays the attitude of a servant to his lord that I used to bear towards the

Dr. Rakhal : ‘Yes, revered sir, I shall examine carefully and see that you do not feel any pain.’

Mother is giving way. Sometimes I pray to Her saying, "Mother, put this sheath in order if Thou likest." But such prayers are falling few and far between. My ego is vanishing and in its stead it is the Mother whom I find to dwell within this frame.'

The Goswami has come on invitation to sing. A devotee asks, 'Should he sing?' The Master is ill and if there is devotional music he may go into ecstasies. All are afraid of this.

Sri Ramakrishna : 'Let there be a little singing. The only fear is that I may be driven into an ecstatic mood. The throat aches in that state.'

As he listens to the Kirtan the Master can no longer hold his feelings under control. He stands up and begins to dance with the devotees.

Dr. Rakhal witnesses all this. The carriage he has hired is waiting for him. He and M. get up to return to Calcutta. Both of them bow down to Sri Ramakrishna. *Sri Ramakrishna* (affectionately, to M.) : 'Have you taken your meal?'

INSTRUCTIONS ABOUT BRAHMA-JNANA TO M.

Thursday, 24th September

It is a full moon night. Sri Ramakrishna is seated on the small cot in his room. He is afflicted with the pain in his throat. M. and other devotees are sitting on the floor.

Sri Ramakrishna (to M.) : 'Sometimes it flashes in my mind that the body is nothing but an outer cover for the soul, as a pillow-case is for the pillow. The Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute is the only reality that exists. It is one and undifferentiated.

'When in an exalted mood I grow altogether oblivious of the diseased throat. Now again I am slowly getting into that mood and feel amused at it.'

The sister and a grandmother of Dvija have come to see Sri Ramakrishna hearing that he was ill. They bow down to him and take their seat in one side of the room. At the sight of the grandmother the Master inquires, 'Who is she? Is it she who has brought up Dvija? Well, why has Dvija bought that single-stringed musical instrument?'

M. : 'No, revered sir, it is a double-stringed instrument.'

Sri Ramakrishna : 'His father is not in favour of these things; and what will others think? It is better for him to offer his prayers in private so that others may not know of it.'

There was an extra picture of Gaur and Nitai hung on the wall of Sri Ramakrishna's room. It represents Gaur and Nitai absorbed in devotional singing with their followers at Navadvip.

Ramlal (to Sri Ramakrishna) : 'I am giving this picture, then, to M.'

Sri Ramakrishna : 'Yes, that's good.'

For some time Sri Ramakrishna is under the treatment of Dr. Pratap. The Master has got up at dead of night. His suffering has become very acute. Harish serves him and is living in the same room with him. Rakhal also is there. Srijut Ramlal is sleeping in the verandah outside. The Master expressed his agony later in the words, 'I felt as if death was overtaking the body and was inclined to hold Harish in embrace. Madhyamarnarayana oil was applied and I felt better. Then, again, I began to dance.'

NARENDRA -- A PRINCE AMONG MEN

It is the next day of the car festival in the year 1885. Sri Ramakrishna is sitting at the house of Balaram in the morning and is surrounded by devotees. He speaks of the greatness of Narendrakrishna.

Sri Ramakrishna : 'Narendra is a high soul and of a manly type. So many devotees are coming but none is a match for him.'

‘Sometimes I compare notes and see that if some of them may be likened to a ten-petalled or a sixteen-petalled or even a hundred-petalled lotus, Narendra stands out as a thousand-petalled one.

‘Others may be compared to a small pitcher or a jar, but Narendra is like a large vessel.

‘Nothing can hold control over Narendra. He is free from all attachments, and sense pleasure can offer no attraction for him. He is like a male pigeon. If you take hold of the male pigeon by its beak it will snatch it away from your hand but a female one will simply keep quiet.

REALIZE GOD FIRST

Three years earlier, in 1882, Narendra went to Dakshineswar with some of his Brahmo friends to pay a visit to Sri Ramakrishna and stayed for the night with him. Early next morning the Master said, ‘Go to the Panchavati and meditate.’ After some time the Master

followed him and saw that he was meditating there with his friends. At the end of the meditation the Master said, ‘Look here, the one aim of life is the realization of God. In solitude and behind the gaze of all one should devote oneself heart and soul to the thought and contemplation of God and pray to Him with tears in his eyes, saying, “Lord, be pleased and bless me with Thy vision.” With regard to such philanthropic works as female education, founding of schools and delivering lectures that are carried on by the Brahmo Samaj and the people of other faiths, he said, ‘First realize God in both of His aspects, as with forms and without form. He who is beyond the reach of mind and speech, takes up various forms for His devotees. He appears before them and talks to them. One should go in for philanthropic works only after one has realized Him and has received the commission from Him.’

GOD'S GRACE AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

BY SWAMI TURIYANANDA

Spiritual practices are necessary. But God cannot be realized merely through spiritual practices, He can be realized only through His Grace—this is the final view of all scriptures and great sages. This is emphasized so that no pride of spirituality can enter the heart. Further, full reliance has to be placed on Him. There need be no fear that wild thoughts may lead the mind astray from His path. The Master used to say, 'The more one advances towards the east, the more one leaves the west behind.' The more you devote your mind to religious practices, the more other thoughts disappear. What is the use of conjuring up trouble which is non-existent. Does anybody kill oneself because death is inevitable? Anxiety, lest some obstacle arise, only harms activity—there is no gain. 'I have taken refuge in God; all my obstacles and troubles will pass away. What trouble can there be for me?'—one should cling to this faith. There is no other way except depending on Him, no matter whether the aspirant is strong or weak. This is all I know. If one takes a step towards God, He advances ten steps forward—it is this which I have all along heard and felt to some extent in my life. God is the inner ruler—He knows everything. How can devotional exercises be possible if one does not believe that He is all-knowing? I fail to see. Let the mind yearn for realizing

Him, but one has to watch that desires for anything else do not make the mind restless. The professional peasant earns his livelihood from cultivation; he follows no other trade:—

'Whom else shall I call on, O Shyama, the child calls the mother alone.

I am no such mother's child that I shall call whomsoever as mother. If mother chastises the child, the child cries out, "Mother, mother." Even if she flings it away by the neck it still calls, "Mother, mother." '

This attitude is after my heart. 'Does it lie in one's power to continue calling on the Lord?' My answer is that nothing is within one's power. When this is realized, there remains no other way but resignation and appeal for mercy. 'Unfurling the sail' is no more than continuing devotional practices without intermission. If the mind refuses to act up to your words, chastise your mind or punish it more heavily. Practice means repeated effort at fixing a thought in the mind; this effort must be accompanied with faith and zest. Solitary living helps to know one's mind, and so it becomes easy to adopt the right means. Sannyasa (renunciation) means complete self-surrender to Him, there should be no cant. This is the highest aim of life.

SPIRITUAL REVIVAL

Long before Oswald Spengler wrote *The Decline of the West* prophetic souls had foreseen the approaching catastrophe. In one of his addresses, delivered as early as January 1897, Swami Vivekananda sounded the note of warning in the following words : 'Europe is restless, does not know where to turn. The material tyranny is tremendous. The wealth and power of a country are in the hands of a few men who do not work, but manipulate the work of millions of human beings. By this power they can deluge the whole earth with blood. Religion and all things are under their feet; they rule and stand supreme. The Western world is governed by a handful of Shylocks. All those things you hear about—constitutional government, freedom, liberty, and parliaments—are jokes. . . . The whole of Western civilization will crumble to pieces in the next fifty years if there is no spiritual foundation. It is hopeless and perfectly useless to attempt to govern mankind with the sword. You will find that the very centres from which such ideas as government by force sprang up, are the very first centres to degrade and degenerate and crumble to pieces. Europe, the centre of manifestation of material energy, will crumble to dust within fifty years, if she is not mindful to change her position, to shift her ground and make spirituality the basis of her life.' Forty-four years have passed away and there are barely six more for Europe to change her position, shift her ground and begin to build anew in order to avoid total disaster. The present conflagration is perhaps the beginning of the end of the old order. A contemporary thinker recently declared that the present-day civilization, centr-

ing as it does round banks and factories and corporations and industries has absolutely no chance of survival. We are told that this civilization in which men are pursuing wealth and power often at the expense of justice deserves to perish and ought to perish and that the only hope of humanity lies in a true spiritual revival. The present industrial civilization is not confined to the West; it has, to a certain extent, spread to the East also. The debacle when it comes will certainly be world-wide and consequently the problem of reconstruction also is a world problem.

* * *

The saving forces of civilization, we are told, lie in a true spiritual revival. It behoves us, therefore, to try and understand what exactly is meant by a true spiritual revival. To clarify the issues concerned, it may also be necessary to analyse the present world-situation and bring to light the hidden forces that tend to disintegrate civilization and also make the attempt to discover the nature of the higher forces that would usher in a fresh reintegration and regeneration of human civilization. The religious legends of India contain many accounts of the fights between the Devas and the Asuras, between the forces of good and the forces of evil and the ultimate triumph of the good. Children listen to these beautiful tales in their nurseries and grow up in the conviction that the forces of good always triumph; but when they attain manhood and womanhood and take their places in the life of the world, they become thoroughly disillusioned, for they see evil and unscrupulous men succeeding beyond measure and they also see men disposed to a virtuous life suffering from chill penury and utter frustration.

The moral of the legends escapes their comprehension. Often they cast aside the religious legends as mere fairy tales, concocted by priests with other motives. Or as in the Christian countries they keep religion and spirituality for off-days and guide their working days along the paths that bear the sign-boards marked with the words: 'Get on' and 'get ahead.' Pushing and struggling they force their way through the crowd and often attain a measure of success proportionate to their ability to strike their opponents down by fair means or foul.

* * *

Money rules the world. Society, as at present constituted functions on a competitive basis. Even the philosopher must live before he can philosophize. The academician may not find it quite convenient to live like Socrates on what chance may bring and frequent the market-places pursuing knowledge for its own sake. All philosophers cannot retire to mountain caves and forest abodes and spend their lives away from the turmoil of the world. Priests and professors who have families to support are reminded by cruel necessity to pitch their tents on the valleys although they may clandestinely allow their inner minds to soar to the mountain peaks of wisdom. Those priests and professors who want to get on and get ahead are forced to pander to the whims and fancies of their wealthy patrons. Bankers and merchant princes of all countries have built churches and have also endowed educational institutions. Purest motives of philanthropy may have induced them to spend their money for the welfare of their fellow men. Being businessmen they are often farsighted enough to see that the institutions they nurture function in the way in which they would like them to function. Can they leave the finances to be bungled by mere priests and

scholars? No. These patrons reserve to themselves the paramount right in all vital matters connected with the management of the trusts they have created. Priests and professors may be allowed a small margin of free-thinking. There are limits beyond which they cannot proceed. Bankers and merchant princes rule and stand supreme. 'Religion and all things are under their feet.'

* * *

Might is right in the existing order. Can any one deny this fact? Do we not see before us the brilliant triumphs achieved by ruthless aggression? Where are the small nations that erstwhile held their heads high with no stain on their fair names? Where are they that honestly toiled to earn their sustenance and carried on their lives peacefully and in contentment? Has not the aggressor's sword humiliated them and cast them into the gloomy slough of despondence? Are we not told that the world is unsafe for small nations and also for those that are militarily unprepared? Seeing these happenings, how can we say that the right will ultimately triumph and peace and contentment will reign over the whole earth? Is not life itself a mighty battle-field, where the strong win and the weak go to the wall? Can the exhortations of priests and professors prevent the strong from acting in the only manner in which they would act to achieve their own ends? Are the oppressed peoples of the world to rest contented with the promise of a reward in the ever-receding future, when universal peace and goodness will prevail upon the world? Will such a day ever come so long as the conditions that rule to-day continue to exist?

* * *

Pious and sincere men of all countries speak of social justice. But few seem to know how that desirable consumma-

tion is to be achieved. It is easy to see that there is something very wrong in the existing economic order. Otherwise, why should the toiling millions of the world suffer under perpetual famine conditions even when the granaries contain enough food to fill all mouths? The labourer is ready to put in his share of arduous toil willingly and ungrudgingly. Why then should his child cry for a crust of bread or a handful of rice and his poor wife fail to get sufficient clothing to cover her nakedness? Shylocks are abroad, you might say. They make use of the laws framed by themselves or by their nominees to legally drain the poor of the last drop of their life-blood. This world also contains tyrants and aggressors who prowl about like hungry beasts and make use of every opportunity to despoil the poor of the fruits of their labour. Priests may attempt to lull the poor into the belief that they that suffer misery here will be generously recompensed in a future world. It is extremely consoling to hear that poor Lazarus, stricken with foul leprosy and dire poverty here on earth will in the life to come be comfortably seated in the lap of Father Abraham and Dives who ill-treated him will be cast into eternal hell-fire. But unfortunately poor Lazarus finds that the pangs of hunger cannot be appeased by sweet consoling words. The priggish philosopher cast into the same mould as the Pharisee of old expounds the law of Karma and with incomparable hardness of heart tells us that the poor suffer because of their misdeeds committed in a previous life and that the rich enjoy the merits which they acquired before they were born. The law of Karma of the philosopher appears to strike the balance sheet in the present life itself and does not even contain the element of consolation which the priest offers in a post-mortem existence. These in brief

are the ideals of social justice now in practice in both the hemispheres. This in bare outline is the picture of the material tyranny referred to in Swami Vivekananda's thought-provoking address and of the economic system controlled by banks and corporations, which Sir S. Radhakrishnan so ably denounces.

Mr. Edward Carpenter's book on *Civilization: Its Cause and Cure* appeared to us in our early days to be a remarkable book. World-events of the past two decades bear ample testimony to the insight of the author. The thesis he put forward is almost self-evident in the light of existing facts. This civilization that has led to two sanguinary world-conflicts within the brief space of twenty-five years may indeed be compared to a cancerous growth that feeds on the vitals of humanity. A cancer may appear rosy outwards, but undoubtedly there is corruption within. This evil of Cain, this fratricidal strife, this eagerness for mutual destruction is not a healthy condition of the human race. Human values have been forgotten and money rules the world; right has receded to the background and might reigns supreme. Religion, having its own vested interests, has forgotten its sacred mission and bows down to political power. The creative activities of the spirit of man are altogether dormant and ugliness has taken the place of the beautiful. Students give their time to the natural sciences and economics and care more for that which is useful than for the unattached pursuit of truth. Our vice-chancellors tell us that metaphysics and ethics may soon cease to find a place in the curriculum of studies. Both in the sphere of thought and in the sphere of action the tendency appears to be towards disintegration, towards the breaking up of human society into national, racial, and ideological groups, militant and opposed +

one another. Under the stress of internal factions and external aggression law and order are becoming extremely unstable. Thinking men recognize the existence of the malady. Acting on the dictum 'As long as there is life, there is hope,' statesmen are making frantic efforts to effect temporary cures. But the malady appears to be too deep-set to yield to nostrums and pills.

* * *

Whence will the spiritual revival come, what forms will it take, and wherein lies its potency to effect a complete cure of a malady the symptoms of which are so complicated and diversified, are the questions to which we shall now address ourselves. We began by quoting the opinion of a great spiritual genius of the age. Let us remember that Swami Vivekananda delivered his addresses on Jnana-Yoga in the city of London, in the heart of the British Empire. The preaching of the Vedanta in the heart of the British Empire appears to have a deep significance. Let us listen to what Swami Vivekananda has to say on this matter. 'Yes, it is worth one's while to plant an idea in the heart of this great London, surely the greatest governing machine that has ever been set in motion. I often watch its working, the power and perfection with which the minutest vein is reached, its wonderful system of circulation and distribution. It helps one to realize how great is the Empire, and how great its task. And with all the rest, it distributes thought. It would be worth a man's while to place some ideas in the heart of this great machine, so that they might circulate to the remotest part.' The early Christian apostles planted the ideas of their Master in the heart of the city of Rome, the metropolis of the World at that time. The ideas spread and gave rise to a new civilization. In the march of time the old order

changed, but Rome continues to be the centre of Christendom. May not something similar happen again, and London become the distributing centre of Vedantic thought? The conquered Greece conquered Rome, it is said. Why should not conquered India make herself ready to effect a cultural conquest of the British Empire? Advaita Vedanta, upholding the divinity of man, provides a rational basis for democracy. With its principles of universal tolerance, it rises above sects and creeds. It looks upon man as man and has the power to harmonize racial differences. If India is to remain within the empire it will be on a basis of equality. Nazi and Fascist ideas of racial superiority will have to go and will go. We hope that a true commonwealth will emerge out of the present conflict and the strength of the commonwealth will to a great extent depend upon the strength of the individual citizen and his capacity to combine with his fellow citizens whole heartedly and unreservedly in order to build a new civilization on a more stable basis.

* * *

The first lesson which Vedanta teaches to both men and women is their potential greatness; 'The greatest error, says the Vedanta, is to say that you are weak, that you are a sinner, a miserable creature, and that you have no power, and you cannot do this or that.' 'You are the Pure One; awake and arise. O mighty one, this sleep does not befit you. Think not that you are weak and miserable. Almighty, arise and awake, and manifest your own nature.' This is the clarion-call of Swami Vivekananda, the great apostle of the Vedanta. We shall quote a few more passages from the Jnana-Yoga. 'The remedy for weakness is not brooding over weakness, but thinking of strength. Teach men of the strength that is already within them.' 'Throughout the history of mankind, if

any motive power has been more potent than another in the lives of all men and women, it is that of faith in themselves. Born with the consciousness that they were to be great, they were great.' 'Faith in ourselves will do everything.' 'Build up your character and manifest your Real Nature, the Effulgent, the Resplendent, the Ever-Pure, and call It up in everyone that you see.' 'Infinite power and existence and blessedness are ours, and we have not to acquire them : they are our own, and we have only to manifest them.' 'Be free; hope for nothing from any one.'

* * *

This idea arises from the knowledge of the divine in man. God is both transcendent and immanent. In His immanent aspect he is the Soul of all souls. Swami Vivekananda saw the divinity in the wicked and the miserable. He coined the beautiful significant term : Daridra-Narayana, a term which has passed into current usage among the thinkers and reformers of modern India. The true philosophy of service, Karma-Yoga, was formulated by the great Swami. In his wake, modern India has earnestly taken up the work of uplifting the untouchable and the downtrodden. At this stage, the reader may ask, why this philosophy, which has been with India for centuries, was not put into practice until the present time and how comes it to be that nations who do not possess the theory have consciously or unconsciously practised the Vedanta. The seeming anomaly may be explained as follows. The religious practice of a nation is to a great extent bound up with its political life. The self-abasement of the serf and his meek subservience are the outcome of a feudal conception of life and are fostered by feudalism. Democracy makes man not only to do his duties but also claim his rights. Liberal ideas can thrive only in a liberal

atmosphere. The influence is, of course, mutual. The Vedantic ideals were conceived in an epoch of freedom. They were fostered during the ages in the free and uncramped atmosphere of the forest universities by fearless men who defied not only kings and gods but also cold and hunger. This priceless heritage has now been bequeathed by Swami Vivekananda to the rich and the poor, to the outcast and the aristocrat, to men and women, to the learned and the illiterate of all nations and of all climes. The heaven is steadily spreading everywhere.

* * *

The writings of Walt Whitman and Edward Carpenter bear evidence to the striking similarity between Vedantic ideals and democratic ideals. Whitman has been rightly designated as the first great prophet of modern democracy. His belief in human values makes him say, 'A great city is that which has the greatest men and women. If it be a few ragged huts it is still the greatest city in the whole world.' He sees the divine aspect of man and exclaims, 'I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four, and each moment then. In the faces of men and women I see God, and in my own face in the glass.' His belief in equality finds expression in the following lines :

I speak the password primeval, I
give the sign of democracy,

By God ! I will accept nothing
which all cannot have on the
same terms.

Whoever degrades another degrades
me,

And whatsoever is said or done
returns at last to me.

Poise and balance of mind and the capacity to face all situations with imperturbable calmness is one of the fruits of Vedantic discipline. Concerning this Swami Vivekananda says. 'Real activity, which is the goal of

APPLIED RAMAKRISHNA

A CONTRIBUTION TO PRAGMATIC PHILOSOPHY

BY PROF. DR. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR

[Prof. B. K. Sarkar, President, Bengali Institute of Sociology, presents here the practical aspects of the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. This paper is based on a public lecture delivered at Dhanbad, Bihar, under the auspices of the local Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Society. The shorthand notes of the lecture were taken by Mr. Sudhir Chandra Nandy. We are retaining the lecture form because of its effectiveness of appeal.—Ed.]

In this audience we have all sorts of persons, young men and women, children, boys and girls, adults, elderly people and a few really old men. Then, again, some of us here are Biharis, some Bengalis and the others are perhaps non-Bihari and non-Bengali Indians. If, again, I begin to analyse this audience it appears that some of us belong to very modest strata of society, I mean, command very small incomes. A few are somewhat prosperous and just a few perhaps very rich.

I am only wondering how it is possible for all these different sorts of men and women to approach Ramakrishna and his teachings. If, therefore, I am asked to select a topic for to-night's talk it appears to me that perhaps the only thing that I could possibly do is to try to get something of common or universal practical value out of Ramakrishna. If possible, I should like to apply Ramakrishna and his teachings to the problems of all and sundry.

Science is divided into two general branches,—one is theoretical and the other is applied. For instance, there is applied physics and there is applied chemistry. With the former you make electric fans, with the latter dyes and colours. Let my topic to-night then be called Applied Ramakrishna. Is it possible, I wonder, to utilize Ramakrishna

in such a manner as to give satisfaction to the man on the village farm, the woman in the kitchen, the scavenger, the *mazdoor*, the industrial worker, the financier, the miner, the clerk, the employer, the administrator, the pariah, and anybody and everybody? The diversities of the temperaments, needs, interests, etc. of so varied personalities are immense.

A boy of fifteen looks at the world from one standpoint and his father, the adult, looks at things from an entirely different angle. The man sees one aspect of the world, and his wife, a woman, another aspect. And, therefore, all the time trying to think of unity is absurd, unpractical, worthless. I should commence by admitting that it is hardly possible to have unity in life. Here we are, a chance assembly of people drawn together just for the time being. The most fundamental difference is the difference in age and another fundamental difference is the difference in income. A no less momentous difference is the difference between man and woman. To talk about unity, harmony, peace, absence of conflicts is something that is unnatural, utterly inhuman, absolutely irrational. There is the young man's point of view and there is the adult's point of view. Then, again, there is the poor man's point of view and there

is the rich man's point of view. And so on.

I look at the world as a human being of flesh and blood, and therefore I try to understand Ramakrishna from the standpoint of flesh and blood. If I can apply Ramakrishna to the problems of human beings, men and women as they factually are, conditioned as they are by sex, age, income, etc., I shall believe that I have done something.

Has Ramakrishna any message for the men and women of the world about us? I have very often declared on many occasions that the most fundamental message of Ramakrishna is the gospel of hope. Ramakrishna is the prophet of war and triumph over difficulties, and of strength and victory in the overthrow of obstacles.¹ He is the *avatar* of the pursuit of life in the teeth of opposition. Ramakrishna's words are the words of courage and self-confidence. My Applied Ramakrishna must, then, be able to translate this hope, war, triumph, strength, life, courage and self-confidence into concrete realities in the everyday life of men and women.

Human life is the theatre of sufferings of all sorts. Suffering is one of the greatest realities. The world has innumerable sufferers, miserables, unfortunates. What kind of hope is it possible to get for these miserables and unfortunates among men and women? Is it really true that there is hope for mankind, that men and women can carry on war against and triumph over sufferings? I believe that the failures of the world, ostensible as they are, are not all failures. I shall take three classes of miserables: first, the poor, secondly, the pariah and last not

least, the plucked (since there are young school and college folks present here), and I am going to demonstrate that each one of them has been achieving some success in life which he that runs may read.

The verification of my Applied Ramakrishna as the gospel of hope will lie just in the fact of these successes and triumphs achieved by the poor, the pariah and the plucked. It is on statistically demonstrable pragmatic realities derived from factual experiences in East and West that the gospel of Ramakrishna can be said to establish its claims to recognition as a profound re-making in philosophy under modern conditions. It is not the mere pious wish of a well-meaning saint or a sort of copy-book sop to the failures and incurables in order to counsel perseverance and patience in their prospective careers. Every realistic sociology of human struggles and conquests, of creative disequilibria, in diverse fields can but lead to this grand conclusion.

POVERTY AND CREATIVITY

Social statistics and social sciences have only one message and that is the message of hope, and this hope is grounded in the realities of the past and the present.

If you ask me what I know of the world in East and West and what I have seen of mankind as it is and has been, I should reply in one word that the world belongs to the poor man. It is the poor man who rules the world. It is the poor man that has always conquered the world. This appears to be a most absurd statement. Nothing should seem to be more silly than a remark like this. And yet nothing is to me truer, more positive, more pragmatic, and more objective as an

¹ B. K. Sarkar: *Creative India from Mohenjodaro to the Age of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda* (Lahore, 1937), pp. 464-472, 694-697.

account of the affairs of men and women.

The absurdity of my position is indeed patent on the surface. Everybody in the two hemispheres is too painfully aware that it is the man with means that lords it over in the market-place. The moneyed man commands the press and the platform in Asia as in Eur-America. The financial magnate passes for an authority in everything from the paddy-fields on the Earth to the canals in the Mars. The high-salaried government official cannot be challenged by anybody in regard to questions of any kind, moral, social or religious. He is supposed to be *sabjanta*, knowing everything. And in political life leadership can be commanded only by the man who possesses several automobiles as well as the sinews of war to maintain a bunch of sycophants. Apparently the world, mankind's morals, manners and sentiments—the arts and sciences—all should appear to be controlled and commanded by wealth.

In spite of this much too palpable dictatorship of money and the easily visible domination of the world by the rich, I maintain that the men and women who are guiding the world, directing the masses and the classes along fresh untrodden paths, dragging mankind willy-nilly to the next higher stages of its potentialities, and establishing new socio-cultural and spiritual patterns for to-day and to-morrow are those who are poor. My view of human progress and social advance is entirely opposed to the apparent, the obvious and the visible.

Does the poor man require to be described? I don't believe he does. Everybody present here knows the poor man. Neither in Bihar nor in Bengal, nor in the rest of India do we need to define poverty. But still let

me be precise. The poor man is a man who does not have two meals a day. In my expressive Bengali the poor men and women are persons who *adh-peta-khay*, i.e. eat half-stomachs. Or they are the persons who do not *du bela anchay*, i.e. cannot rinse their mouths twice a day. They are half-fed, semi-naked, unhoused people. If this picture of poverty should appear to be too realistic, too unparliamentary, nay, too tragic to certain temperaments let me satisfy them by declaring that the poor man is a person whose earnings are too modest to be *pakrowed* (caught) by the income-tax commissioner. Such persons are to be found in thousands, in millions not only in Bihar, in Bengal, in India, but in every country of the world, including the richest regions, e.g. Great Britain, the U.S.A., France and Germany. My observation is that the world has ever been factually governed by persons who come from such classes. It is the ill-fed, ill-clad and ill-housed classes, communities or families, it is the non-income-tax-paying groups of citizens in a country that have ever been the source of men and women who have re-made the world and reconstructed the society. The rôle of poor men as the re-makers of mankind and creators of epochs in culture is to me the most palpable truth, the first postulate of history, economics, philosophy and sociology. This is in my appraisal the solidest foundation of the science of progress and the art of human betterment or the *système de politique positive* (to use Comte's phrase).

CREATIVITIES IN BIHAR AND BENGAL

I am talking to-night in a town of Bihar. So by way of illustration I should ask you to verify my postulate or examine its validity and worth

pragmatically by an enumeration of the leading men and women of Bihar to-day, i.e. by an inventory of the contemporary Bihari creativities. There are quite a few prominent persons in contemporary Bihar. How many of them do you recognize as somewhat creative persons, as the makers of Bihari ideals, and the founders of a new age for Bihari men and women? Naturally, you will, first, have to make out a list of the well-known persons in politics, in law-courts, in business, and in culture. You will have to list the highly placed officials in the administrative system including the legislature. Then you are sure to count the authors and journalists, poets, novelists, painters, sculptors, musicians and playwrights. Some of them are perhaps known as scientists, philosophers or antiquarians. You are not likely to ignore the researchers in industry, technology, the exact sciences and the humanities. The religious missionaries and social reformers are not to be excluded by any means. Last but not least, your list will care to include the politicians, young and old, of all parties, communities and denominations, the labour leaders, the *kisan* (farmer) leaders, the trade-unionists, and all groups of martyrs for political freedom and social justice.

In the next place, I should ask you to go into the biographical details about these leading men and women of Bihar in the most diverse professions and occupations. This biography is to be confined for the present purpose to the economic and financial items of their lives. The most important question about all of them is the level of their present incomes. How much do they earn to-day? You would not be disclosing any tremendous secrets of socio-economic life if you were to come out with the proposition that as 'gainfully

employed' persons these leading men and women of Bihar fall mainly into two classes. The first and the most preponderant class comprises those who, if not actually *adhpetā khawa*, half-meal-takers, are at any rate non-income-tax-payers. The other class, a very small group indeed, belongs to the somewhat substantial sections in so far as they can be reached by the income-tax commissioner. From the standpoint of earnings these are the two fundamental groups in the social stratification of the Bihari people.

These 'somewhat substantial' persons may be further analysed in an intensive manner. You know quite well from personal experience—those of you who have watched the economic developments in Bihar since the beginning of the present century,—that many of the persons who are 'somewhat substantial' in earnings to-day were outside of, i.e. below that class even ten, fifteen or twenty years ago. Many of the richest businessmen, industrialists, lawyers, medical practitioners and members of the different government services were not members of the 'somewhat substantial' groups at the commencement of their careers. A very large number among them was actually poor and in straitened circumstances. Very many of these influential and substantial Biharis of to-day are self-made men in the strictest sense of the term. These facts about the antecedents and previous careers of the leaders and prominent personalities are open secrets, if secrets at all they be. You should not misunderstand me. I do not vouch that not a single person among the substantial lawyers, doctors, bankers, intellectuals, government servants etc. of to-day was financially substantial in his childhood or youth. You are simply to take it that the number of rich families that have contributed to the prosperous

persons of to-day is very very small, so small that it may be virtually ignored. This is a purely statistical question and deserves to be carefully gone into with a somewhat long-period view-point by economic and sociological, nay, political researchers.

I should now ask you to go a little bit further back in time. Make inquiries about the parents of these substantial persons of to-day. How many fathers of such men were substantial? Then, again, what about their grandfathers and great-grandfathers? You will be convinced that, say, about 1857 the ancestors of most of the prominent and prosperous citizens of to-day were persons of very modest means and humble in every economic sense.

The majority of the worth-while men of Bihar at the present moment is poor. Of the minority, again, a preponderantly large proportion was poor half a generation ago and of course two generations ago. It is very difficult to point to many leaders of Bihari public life, business and culture who have been continuously prosperous for two generations. The rôle of the poor men as the factual rulers of mankind in ideas, ideals, movements and activities, is then demonstrated by the history of our own times, so far as Bihar is concerned. Whatever is being accomplished in Bihar to-day in politics, industry, science, culture, social reform, religious reconstruction,—is being accomplished in the main by the sons of clerks, peasants, schoolmasters etc., the poorer sections of the Bihari people. It is the poor that have made Bihar and are re-making Bihar with a view to further progress. A statistical study in this field is a desideratum.

I have spoken so much about Bihar because I am talking in a town of Bihar. But I am not unconscious of the pre-

sence of Bengali men and women in this meeting. What about Bengal? I should advise you to institute the same statistical inquiries about the leading personalities of contemporary Bengal. Most of the profoundly creative men and women of Bengal to-day do not know how to make both ends meet. Many of the poets, painters, sculptors, musicians, journalists, school and college teachers, political preachers, labour organizers, social workers, research scholars in the natural and social sciences and so forth are certainly the makers of new epochs in Bengali culture and world-progress. Is it not notorious that most of the members of these creative classes are indigent, miserable and pauperized?

Among the somewhat prosperous Bengalis in law, medical practice, service or business you will find nothing but a repetition of the story of the Biharis. The earnings of the fathers of these prosperous Bengalis of to-day, whether in Calcutta or *mofussil*, were generally speaking, humble. Very many of them have come from poor families, sometimes so poor that hardly anybody knows anything of their parents. The fathers of some of them were cooks and mothers maidservants. How many of the financially substantial Bengalis of 1940 were substantial at the time of our glorious *Swadeshi* revolution of 1905? An exceedingly large number was actually poor. Their fathers were poorer and their grandfathers poorer still. Most of such Bengalis as are earning thousands at the bar, in medical profession and in the services, or have become millionaires and owners of properties on account of business careers were not born with silver spoons in their mouths. In Bengal as in Bihar the poor man of to-day is the rich man of to-morrow, although not invariably.

You do not have to go out of your own geographical horizon into far off Eur-America to discover instances of rich men emerging out of distress, misery and poverty,—from thatched cots and mud floors. The politics, industry, science, art, literature, religion, morals, and philosophy,—in one word, the entire culture of young Bengal is in the main the creation of its poorer representatives. It is the

poor that have conquered Bengal and are conquering Bengal in order to push it forward to the enterprises of world-wide importance. Bengali clerks, peasants, artisans and shopkeepers of low pecuniary status have contributed a large number of the epoch-making stalwarts of politics, commerce and culture in modern and contemporary India.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SRI AUROBINDO

BY PROF. S. K. MAITRA, M.A., PH.D.

[In the *Prabuddha Bharata* of May 1940, we gave a summary of the main topics dealt with in Vol. I of *The Life Divine* and held out the hope that after the publication of Vol. II,* a fuller study of the thought of Sri Aurobindo will be presented in the pages of this journal. We are glad that Prof. S. K. Maitra, Head of the Department of Philosophy and Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Benares Hindu University, has ably accomplished this task; we express our gratitude to him.—Ed.]

I had occasion recently to speak as well as write on the Yoga of Sri Aurobindo. If I am to-day writing on his philosophy, it must not be supposed that I am dealing with a wholly different subject, for, as with our ancient sages, so with Sri Aurobindo, philosophy and Yoga always go hand in hand. Our sages called philosophy *Darshana*; it was with them a vision of truth, and not a mere logical approach to truth. In that view, philosophy is Yoga and Yoga is philosophy. The English word philosophy, again, derived as it is from the two Greek words *philos*, love, and *sophia*, knowledge, means also nothing but love of truth. In that sense, Yoga, as the method of raising the human to the Divine rests primarily and essentially upon the search for truth, which is the aim of philosophy. Any other conception of philosophy—any conception of it, for example, which would reduce it to a

mere logical machinery—or any other conception of Yoga—any conception of it, for example, which would make it a matter of the acquisition of supernormal powers or *Vibhutis*—is totally repugnant to Sri Aurobindo.

I am further tempted to write on Sri Aurobindo's philosophy because of the appearance of his book *The Life Divine*. The year 1940 is a very stirring year in the history of the world. Cataclysmic changes have occurred in it in the political and economical life of man. But for philosophy the most stirring event of the year is the appearance of the book *The Life Divine* in its complete form. No book in this century has shaken philosophical thought to its very foundations so much as this book has done, since the publication of Bergson's *L'Evolution Creatrice* nearly thirty-five years ago. I am not in the habit of making prophecies, nor is prophecy in

* THE LIFE DIVINE, VOL. II (PARTS 1 & 2). By Sri Aurobindo. Published by The Arya Publishing House, 63, College Street, Calcutta. Pp. 1,186. Price Rs. 16.

place in the domain of philosophy, but I hope I shall be pardoned when I say that this book will live for all time as one of the world's greatest philosophical classics. This is my apology for presenting before the readers of the *Prabuddha Bharata*, a journal devoted to religion and philosophy and hallowed by the memory of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, a few thoughts that come to my mind after reading this remarkable book.

PHILOSOPHY MUST STEER CLEAR OF TWO NEGATIONS

The fundamental idea upon which the whole structure of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy rests is that Matter as well as Spirit is to be looked upon as real. It will not do therefore for philosophy to ignore Matter as it will not do for it to ignore Spirit. A spiritualistic philosophy that totally negates Matter is as one-sided as a materialistic philosophy that totally ignores Spirit. The two extremes, therefore, which philosophy must avoid are materialism ignoring Spirit and spiritualism ignoring Matter.

For this reason Sri Aurobindo declares, 'The affirmation of a divine life upon earth and an immortal sense in mortal existence can have no base unless we recognize not only eternal Spirit as the inhabitant of the bodily mansion, the wearer of this mutable robe, but accept Matter of which it is made as a fit and noble material out of which He weaves constantly His garbs, builds recurrently the unending series of His mansions' (*Life Divine* p. 8). We must say with our ancient forefathers, 'Matter also is Brahman' ('annam brahmeti vya-jânât'). The inevitable result of separating Matter from Spirit is, as Sri Aurobindo points out, to force us to make a choice between the two. This is, in fact, what we actually notice in the

history of human thought. Either Spirit has been denied as an illusion of the imagination or Matter has been denied as an illusion of the senses. The result is either 'a great bankruptcy of Life' or 'an equal bankruptcy of the things of the Spirit.'

The materialist's denial of the Spirit rests upon an apothecosis of sensuous knowledge. The senses are for the materialist the sole means of knowledge. Reason, if it goes in any way beyond the data of the senses, must be pronounced to be a false guide.

The extreme narrowness of the materialist's position is its own undoing. There is no possibility of denying the creative function of the mind and the still higher powers of the Spirit in the shaping of our knowledge. There are vast fields which are inaccessible to the senses. And even in the regions where the senses function, the knowledge that is obtained is not tied down to the senses. All knowledge, qua knowledge, exhibits a transcendence of the senses, a reconstruction of the sensuous material by the mind and the higher powers of the Spirit.

But materialism, formidable as it was in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, is now greatly discredited and is no longer such an obstacle to the understanding of the true nature of Reality as the other one-sided theory, the spiritualism which denies altogether the reality of the sensuous world.

The spiritualistic negation of the physical world is called by Sri Aurobindo the 'refusal of the ascetic,' and is pronounced by him to be 'more complete, more final, more perilous in its effects on individuals or collectivities than the materialistic denial of the spiritual world.'

This one-sided affirmation of the Spirit is the characteristic note of Indian

thought as we find it in the Vedanta. Due to the predominant position which the Vedanta occupies in our country, this way of thinking even now dominates Indian thought, which is still more or less under the shadow of 'the great refusal,' as Sri Aurobindo calls it.

Not that this line of thought has not been of help in the development of our culture. It has done tremendous service in quickening the spiritual life. It has created in man a great aspiration, the aspiration after unity with the Divine, the spiritual value of which it is impossible to exaggerate.

THE ASCENDING AND THE DESCENDING MOVEMENT: EVOLUTION AND INVOLUTION

But nevertheless it is one-sided. It takes into account only one aspect of the world-process—the aspect of ascent. But there is the other aspect of it also—the aspect of descent. In fact, without the descent of the Spirit into the world, there cannot be any ascent of the world into the Spirit. To the extent to which the Spirit has descended into the world, to that very extent it is possible for the world to ascend into the Spirit. There is a descent of the Spirit even into Matter. That is why Matter seeks to evolve into something higher than Matter—Life. There is a descent of the Spirit into Life, and that is why Life seeks to rise to something higher than itself—Mind. Similarly, there is a descent of the Spirit into Mind, and Mind must therefore move towards its Source by ascending to something higher than itself—Supermind. The ascending process does not stop with the Supermind but continues till the Absolute Spirit or Sachchidananda is reached.

The descending process is called *Involution*, and the ascending process *Evolution*. Everywhere Evolution is

conditioned by Involution. The evolution of Matter is possible only because there has been an involution of the Spirit into Matter. Had there not been a deposit of the Spirit in Matter, the latter could not have evolved. That is why it is so necessary to look upon Matter also as spiritual. That is why the one-sided spiritual view which totally ignores Matter is so fundamentally wrong. You cannot talk of evolution and yet deny the spiritual element in Matter. As with Matter, so is it with Life, Soul and Mind. There can be no talk of any upward movement of these unless each of these bears the stamp of the Spirit upon its back. Ascent without descent, evolution without involution is unthinkable. The Vedantist in his enthusiasm for the ascent of the human consciousness into the Divine forgets this fundamental fact. He ignores altogether the mainspring of all evolution—the descent of the Spirit into the minutest particle of Matter.

Evolution reproduces in the reverse order the process of the descent of the Spirit in involution. The order of involution, as sketched by Sri Aurobindo, (*Vide Life Divine* Vol. I, p. 403) is as follows: Existence, Consciousness-Force, Bliss, Supermind, Mind, Psyche (or Soul), Life, Matter. The order of evolution will therefore be: Matter, Life, Psyche, Mind, Supermind, Bliss, Consciousness-Force, Existence. The first four constitute the lower hemisphere, the last four the upper hemisphere. The stages in the lower hemisphere constitute the subordinate forms of those in the upper hemisphere. 'Mind is a subordinate form of Supermind which takes its stand in the standpoint of division. Life is similarly a subordinate power of the energy aspect of Sachchidananda, it is Force working out form and the play of conscious energy from the standpoint of division created

by Mind; Matter is the form of the substance of being which the existence of Sachchidananda assumes when it subjects itself to the phenomenal action of its consciousness and force' (Ibid. p. 402). Psyche or Soul is similarly a subordinate power of the third divine principle of Infinite Bliss, but a power 'in terms of our consciousness and under the conditions of soul-evolution in the world.'

The knot between the higher and the lower hemispheres is where Mind and Supermind meet with a veil between them. 'The rending of the veil is the condition of the divine life in humanity; for by that rending, by the illuminating descent of the higher into the nature of the lower being and the forceful ascent of the lower being into the nature of the higher, mind can recover its divine light in an all-comprehending supermind, the soul realize its divine self in the all-possessing, all-blissful Ananda, life repossess its divine power in the play of omnipotent Consciousness-Force and matter open to its divine liberty as a form of the divine Existence' (Ibid. p. 404).

The changes brought about by the descent of Supermind into Mind and the consequent evolution of Mind into Supermind have further been described as follows: 'And this means the evolution not only of an untrammelled consciousness, a mind and sense not shut up in the walls of the physical ego or limited to the poor basis of knowledge given by the physical organs of sense, but a life-power liberated more and more from its mortal limitations, a physical life fit for a divine inhabitant and—in the sense not of attachment or of restriction to our present corporeal frame but an exceeding of the law of the physical body—the conquest of death, an earthly immortality' (Ibid. p. 399).

An earthly immortality! Here we have, in fact, one of the most startling features of Sri Aurobindo's conception of evolution. Our evolution to a higher stage does not mean any severance from our body, life, soul or mind, but it means a complete transformation of these. In their transformed condition many of their characteristics which are merely accidental, that is to say, which belong to them only in their present unregenerate state, will disappear. For instance, death is not an inherent characteristic of life, but is only a feature of it so far as it is subservient to the operation of Mind. Thus, when Life is freed from the operation of Mind, as it will be on the descent of the Supermind, it will not be any longer subject to death.

With the genius of a true philosopher Sri Aurobindo realizes that to fly from Matter would be really to fly from Spirit. If the Spirit is truly to be the supreme principle, there is no escape from the position that Matter must also be spiritual, in spite of its staggering stupidity and iron necessity. To spiritualize Matter must therefore be the task of evolution and not escape from Matter.

In fact, escapism is the last thing which finds favour with Sri Aurobindo. In words that breathe lofty heroism and unshakable faith in the supremacy of the Spirit, he says, 'Therefore, the exclusive spiritual seeker is justified from his viewpoint if, disgusted with the mud of Matter, revolted by the animal grossness of Life or impatient of the self-imposed narrowness and downward vision of Mind, he determines to break from it all and return by inaction and silence to the Spirit's immobile liberty. But that is not the sole view-point, nor, because it has been sublimely held or glorified by shining and golden examples, need we consider it the integral and ultimate wisdom. Rather, liberating ourselves from all passion and revolt, let us

see what this divine order of the universe means, and, as for this great knot and tangle of Matter denying the Spirit, let us seek to find out and separate its strands so as to loosen it by a solution and not cut through it by a violence' (Ibid. Vol. I, p. 371).

The evolution of the world has so far reached four stages: Matter, Life, Psyche and Mind. But the time has now come, says Sri Aurobindo, when Evolution must take a leap into the next higher stage, namely, Supermind. When this leap is taken, there will be a total transformation of the whole world, as has just been explained.

WHERE PHILOSOPHY AND YOGA MEET

This will be made possible, this ascent from Mind to Supermind, by the descent of the latter into the former through the rending of the veil which separates them. How, however, is this to be effected? It will be effected by the Divine Shakti. But even if the Divine Shakti comes forward to rend the veil, the veil will not be rent, the light of the Supermind will not illumine our consciousness, unless there is an intense aspiration on our part for it and an opening out of the whole of our body, life, soul and mind for the purpose of receiving the light. Here is the point where philosophy joins hands with Yoga. What philosophy establishes theoretically as a fundamental necessity, we can only realize practically through Yoga.

The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo has for its object nothing else than this—the preparation of the field, so that when the Supramental light descends, it may find the soil fit to receive it. For it is possible that the Divine may knock at our door, and we in our ignorance and stupidity and crass egotism may not open it. That will be nothing short of a calamity. It is Yoga that enables us to

avert such a calamity. It teaches us to open all the doors of our body, life, soul and mind to the new light that is coming from above. 'The supramental change,' says Sri Aurobindo, 'is a thing decreed and inevitable in the evolution of the earth-consciousness, for its upward ascent is not ended and mind is not its last summit.' 'But that the change may arrive, take form and endure, there is needed the call from below with a will to recognize and not deny the Light when it comes, and there is needed the sanction of the Supreme from above' (*Mother* pp. 83-84). The actual rending of the veil which separates us from the Divine Light can only be done by the Supreme Being; no human effort has the power to do this. Human effort, however, if properly directed, can prepare human beings to receive the Supermind when it descends.

When the veil is rent and the Supermind descends, human beings are transraised to a higher level. But that this consummation may take place, three things are necessary, namely, consciousness, plasticity, and unreserved surrender, the nature of each of which is beautifully described at pp. 75-77 of the book *The Mother*. Lest anybody should think that this means that the whole of the human race should be raised *en bloc* to the supramental level, Sri Aurobindo says very clearly, 'It must be conceded at once that there is not the least probability or possibility of the whole human race rising in a bloc to the supramental level; what is suggested is nothing so revolutionary and astonishing, but only the capacity in the human mentality, when it has reached a certain level or a certain point of stress of the evolutionary impetus, to press towards a higher plane of consciousness and its embodiment in the being' (*Life Divine* Vol. II, Part II, p. 887).

THE 'HOW' AND THE 'WHY' OF THE WORLD-PROCESS

(a) *The Pure Existent*

I have given above a very brief sketch of the world-process as conceived by Sri Aurobindo. I have now to discuss the question of the 'how' and the 'why' of this process.

The problem of Creation and of the world-process after creation has been in all ages the stumbling-block of all monistic philosophers in the East as well as the West. How can the One become Many, and how can the Many remain Many without infringing the Oneness of the One? This problem has proved perplexing as much to our great Acharyas of the Vedanta as to Plato and Spinoza. Pluralists, of course, have escaped this difficulty, but they have done so at the cost of truth.

Sri Aurobindo has discussed the question very fully in *The Life Divine*. The Absolute Reality, as he conceives it, is the triune principle Sachchidananda, that is, Existence-Consciousness-Force-Bliss. The Absolute as a Pure Existent is no doubt the fundamental reality, but movement, energy, process is equally a reality. We have to acknowledge therefore two fundamental facts—a fact of Being and a fact of Becoming.

Strictly speaking, the Absolute is neither Being nor Becoming, neither One nor Many, but is beyond both. Stability and movement, unity and multiplicity are, in fact, our mental representations of the Absolute. 'World-existence,' says Sri Aurobindo, 'is the ecstatic dance of Shiva which multiplies the body of the God numberlessly to the view; it leaves that white existence precisely where and what it was, ever is and ever will be; its sole absolute joy is the joy of the dancing' (Ibid. Vol. I, p. 119). But as it is impossible for us to conceive the Absolute as beyond stability and move-

ment, beyond unity and multiplicity, 'we must accept the double fact, admit both Shiva and Kali and seek to know what is this measureless movement in Time and Space with regard to that timeless and spaceless pure Existence, one and stable, to which measure and measurelessness are inapplicable.'

(b) *The Mother*

The question now arises : What is the nature of this Force which we have just seen is to be regarded as a fundamental fact? Is it conscious or unconscious? Sri Aurobindo shows that it must be regarded as conscious, for the difficulties of either the Sankhya position which treats Prakriti as unconscious or that of the Western materialists who try to derive consciousness from a material force, are really insuperable. But the most formidable obstacle to the acceptance of the fact that Force is conscious is the most widely prevalent view that all consciousness is mental waking consciousness. On account of this view people fail to understand that consciousness is operating in Nature. But this view is absolutely false, so much so that Sri Aurobindo declares that 'it must now definitely disappear from philosophical thinking.' Our highest forms of consciousness are in the subliminal condition. Indeed, our subliminal consciousness has a depth and a power of action far exceeding that of our waking consciousness. There is again the supraconscious consciousness which is totally ignored by this view.

Force, being thus Conscious Force, the question arises : In what way does it stand to the Pure Existent which is the Ultimate Reality? If we suppose this Conscious Force to be the ultimate essence of all existence, then the Pure Existent also cannot remain in its pure existence but is compelled to move. But this view will go against the Absolute-

ness of the Pure Existent, and is therefore untenable. We have to look upon, therefore, this Conscious Force as inherent in the Pure Existent. Force thus inherent in the Pure Existent may be at rest or may be in motion. When it is at rest, it nonetheless exists; indeed, it is the nature of Conscious Force to have this alternative possibility of rest and motion, the first meaning self-concentration and the second self-diffusion.

This Conscious Force which is inherent in the Pure Existent (Sat) and which is the dynamical principle at the root of all world-process, is called by Sri Aurobindo The Mother. Its nature has been very fully described by Sri Aurobindo in his book *The Mother*.

The Mother is the Divine Shakti which is the operative principle of the universe. But she is veiled by her Yogamaya, so long as she works in the lower hemisphere. 'In all that is done in the universe, the Divine through his Shakti is behind all action but he is veiled by his Yogamaya and works through the Ego of the Jiva in the lower nature' (*The Mother* p. 10). So also the Bhagavad-Gita says, 'nāham prakasah sarvasya yogamāyāsamāvritah.'

She appears in three forms: transcendent, universal and individual. 'Transcendent, the original supreme Shakti, she stands above the worlds and links the creation to the ever unmanifest mystery of the Supreme. Universal, the cosmic Mahashakti, she creates all these beings and contains and enters, supports and conducts all these million processes and forces. Individual, she embodies the power of these vaster ways of her existence, makes them living and near to us and mediates between the human personality and the divine Nature' (*The Mother* p. 87). She is further characterized as follows: 'All is she, for all are parcel and portion of the divine

Conscious Force. Nothing can be here or elsewhere but what she decides and the Supreme sanctions; nothing can take shape except what she, moved by the Supreme, perceives and forms after casting it into seed in her creating Ananda' (*Ibid.* p. 89).

(c) Bliss

I have so far spoken of the 'how' of the world-process. The question of the 'why' remains to be discussed. Why does the Absolute create, and after creating, sustain a world of divers forms? What is the object that it has in this whole scheme of creation and sustenance of the world? The answer in one word is: Bliss. It is for the sheer joy of the thing that the Absolute creates and sustains the world. I have already quoted one passage from his book where Sri Aurobindo says, 'World-existence is the ecstatic dance of Shiva . . . its sole absolute object is the joy of the dancing.'

The Supreme Reality, Sachchidananda, is not only Existence and Conscious Force but also Bliss. Its Absoluteness means also its illimitable bliss of conscious existence. The bliss of Sachchidananda, however, is not confined to the still and motionless possession of its absolute self-being. Just as its Conscious Force projects itself into a world of innumerable forms, so also its self-delight revels in an infinite multiplicity of universes. To enjoy this infinite movement and variation of its self-delight is the object of its creative play of Conscious Force.

Even the relative and the finite can rise above their relativity and finitude in proportion as they share this eternal bliss. Bliss, therefore, is the inherent characteristic of every finite being and of every world-process.

The most formidable obstacle to the acceptance of this view is the presence of evil and of pain and suffering. Unless

we are in a position to show that this really is no negation of bliss but is merely a mode of its manifestation, our thesis, namely, that bliss is the inherent characteristic of every finite being and of all world-process, will remain unproved.

Let us meet the difficulty squarely. What is it that is asserted? In the first place, it is said that the presence of evil is a contradiction of the universality of bliss. Here Sri Aurobindo makes the rather startling assertion that 'we do not live in an ethical world.' 'The attempt of human thought to force an ethical meaning into the whole of Nature is one of those acts of wilful and obstinate self-confusion, one of those pathetic attempts of the human being to read himself, his limited habitual human self into all things and judge them from the standpoint he has personally evolved, which most effectively prevent him from arriving at real knowledge and complete sight' (Ibid. Vol. I, p. 144). This assertion, startling as it is, need not stagger us. For the same assertion has been made by most of the idealistic thinkers of the present day, such as Bradley, Bosanquet and Mackenzie. Their arguments also are very similar to those of Sri Aurobindo. They assert, like Sri Aurobindo, that morality is a peculiar feature of human life and cannot be treated as an ultimate characteristic of reality. In the highest condition morality will lapse into something more complete, something which is a fuller expression of ourselves. Bradley says that morality is an appearance, for it rests upon a fundamental opposition between the ideal that is to be achieved and the actuality that falls far short of it. The highest condition, the ultimate nature of reality is thus 'beyond good and evil.'

Ethics, in other words, is only a stage in evolution. The real factor is the urge of Sachchidananda towards self-express-

sion. This urge, says Sri Aurobindo, 'is at first non-ethical, then infra-ethical in the animal. . . And just as all below us is infra-ethical, so there may be that above us whither we shall eventually arrive, which is supra-ethical, has no need of ethics.' (Ibid. p. 146).

Then, again, with regard to the problem of pain and suffering, it must be remembered that universal bliss is something wider and more comprehensive than what we ordinarily call pleasure, even as universal consciousness is something wider and more comprehensive than our waking consciousness. In its comprehensiveness it embraces both pleasure and pain; in fact, pleasure and pain are only its positive and negative currents. Its first phenomenal manifestations are characterized by the dualism of pleasure and pain, but it rises from these to a supreme delight of being which transcends the distinction of pleasure and pain.

In fact, pleasure, pain and indifference are but the superficial vibrations of our limited self which is uppermost in our waking consciousness. They are an imperfect response of an incomplete self to the multiple contacts of the universe. They are only a prelude to the full and united play of the conscious being in us. They are, 'not the true and perfect symphony that may be ours if we can once enter into sympathy with the One in all variations and attune ourselves to the absolute and universal diapason. And if we can go back into ourselves and identify ourselves not with our superficial experience, but with that radiant penumbra of the Divine, we can live in that attitude towards the contacts of the world, and standing back in our entire consciousness from the pleasures and pains of the body, vital being and mind, possess them as experiences whose nature being superficial, does not touch or impose itself on our core and real being.'

In the entirely expressive Sanskrit terms, there is an Anandamaya behind the Manomaya, a vast Bliss-Self behind the limited mental self, and the latter is only a shadowy image and disturbed reflection of the former' (Ibid. p. 158).

Moreover, pleasure, pain and indifference have no absoluteness about them. These reactions of our limited self to the contacts of the universe have only a sanction of habit and no real necessity behind them. We feel pleasure or pain in a particular situation because that is the habit that we have formed. But it is perfectly possible for us to respond in a different way, to feel pleasure when we should have felt pain, and pain when we should have felt pleasure. It is further within our competence to return, instead of the habitual modes of reaction, pleasure, pain and indifference, the response of inalienable delight which is the experience of the true Bliss-Self within us.

Thus the presence of evil and pain in no way contradicts the universal principle of Bliss which is the motive force of the whole universe.

TRANSITION TO THE SUPERMIND

I have so far dealt with Sri Aurobindo's conception of the nature of the Supreme Reality as a Pure Existent

manifesting itself as a Conscious Force and creating out of sheer self-delight. But the creation of a finite world out of the Infinite Consciousness requires an intermediate principle, a principle of selective knowledge which alone can fashion finite appearance out of the infinite reality. The difficulties of Spinoza's theory of modes teach us the necessity of such an intermediate selective principle. This intermediate selective principle of knowledge cannot, however, be regarded as Mind, for this will lead to Illusionism or Mayavada, as Mind distorts Reality by arbitrary division. It must, says Sri Aurobindo, be a selective principle of knowledge which retains the real truth of existence. In other words, it must be a Supreme Truth-Consciousness. To this Supreme Truth-Consciousness, the Creator of the world of finite beings, Sri Aurobindo has given the name *Supermind*. It is the link between Sachchidananda and the finite world.

In my next article I shall deal with Sri Aurobindo's conception of the Supermind and the manner in which the creation of the world as well as its evolution takes place through the Supermind. I shall also deal briefly with his account of the Gnostic Being and of the Divine Life.

THE ADVENT OF ARYANS INTO INDIA

BY PROF. CHARANJIT SINGH BINDRA

Investigations based on the comparative study of philology have led Pictet to surmise that long before the age of the Vedas and the advent of Aryans into India these people had learnt the art of building houses with doors, windows and fire-places for themselves. They could also make pottery, and spin and weave to some extent. They wore cloaks or mantles, used lances, swords, the bow and arrow for attack in war and the shield for defence, though not the armour. They had known the science of navigation, had invented the decimal numeration, and worshipped the heaven, earth, sun, fire, water and wind. This nature worship bore even traces of an earlier monotheism, from which Pictet believes it had proceeded.

The question of the date of Aryan advent into India still bristles with manifold difficulties, though the finds at Mohenjodaro and Harappa have now placed the study on a much firmer footing. Guessing from the nature of antiquities that have been discovered at these places it has been hazarded that the males must have worn loin-clothes, turbans, shirts and shoes, and the ladies, embroidered saris, gowns and jackets, etc. The various kinds of ornaments and toilet requisites show that the ladies were very fashionable. The toy carts with wheels indicate how well advanced these people were on the mechanical side also. Their city was laid to the west of the Indus according to a pre-arranged plan with a perfect hygienic underground drainage system. The houses were sometimes two-storied,

each having a separate well for domestic purposes.

Dating the Aryan advent round about 2000-1500 B.C., Western scholars allocate the finds at Mohenjodaro and Harappa to a pre-Aryan period, 8000-1500 B.C., assigned to the palaeolithic and neolithic peoples who had themselves long emerged from primitive barbarism and developed an urban life. According to Dr. Majumdar these people cannot be definitely affiliated to any race in India such as for example the Dravidians. And a theory is put forward on the basis of certain conclusions derivable from the nature of icons rescued from their seats of culture that many traits of later Hinduism, such as the worship of Shiva in the form of phallus and the mother goddess, which can neither be traced to the Vedas nor have been condemned therein, are a legacy of these people. Also, the Bhakti cult and even some of the philosophic doctrines such as metempsychosis are alleged to have been inherited from the same people. Ultimately, the influx of the Aryans is considered to have caused the downfall of this older culture.

On the other hand Professor Venkateswara held the view that the 'Indus civilization,' which was earlier christened 'Indo-Sumerian' by Sir John Marshall, has nothing in common with the civilization of the brunette peoples of Heliolithic culture, and is the direct descendant of the Aryan stock; though he admits the evidence as to the inter-communication between the 'Indus' and 'Heliolithic' cultures. On certain ethnographical grounds he considers that the finds at Mohenjodaro belong to the

later Vedic period *circa* 5000—8100 B.C., the Treta-Yuga of Puranic legendary history; and that practically all the Rig-Vedic hymns are anterior in date to these finds, and the lower date for these hymns therefore is the fifth millennium B.C. Further, on the strength of some astronomical data in the Rig-Vedic hymns he would push up the anterior date-limit to about eleven thousand B.C. He has also shown at considerable length that side by side with the religion of ritualism there existed one of iconism, and the transition from verbography to iconography in Vedism is traceable even in the Rig-Veda Samhita. His reference is to communal life of common sacrifices and public worship, which is indicative of the Vedic genius in the direction of syncretism and synthesis, of sublimation and trans-valuation. The icons discovered at Mohenjodaro give, indeed, ample evidence of syncretism.

Professor Aiyangar has altogether a different theory to propound. He starts with the presumption that peninsular India being geographically older than the Hindustan proper, man appeared on the former much earlier than on the latter. The excavations at Adichanallur in Tinnevely district are in favour of the conclusion that the palaeolithic man lived in this part of the country; but there is a serious break in the continuity of history in India from the palaeolithic man to his neolithic successor; yet according to the professor there is sufficient evidence to support a conclusion that the latter occupied a fairly large area of South India and had continued to be there ever since. While he cannot say whether these inhabitants belonged to the Australian group or to the other well-known primitive groups of India such as the Negrito, he admits that the land was occupied by two groups of people, one civilized and the

other much less so. Tillers of the land constituted the main bulk of this society to which the Brahmin came later as an immigrant and managed to keep himself aloof from the rest of the people securing for himself the much respected position of sublimity.

The Aryan penetration to the South through the double barrier of the Vindhya mountains and the Narbada is, however, generally accepted to have taken place in the days of Aitareya about 800 B.C. But there must have been earlier visitors, though few and far between, for the immigration even in the eighth century B.C. was not a rapid process, and the description of peculiarly Tamil gods indicate features that would identify them with the Aryan gods. Even the general idea of a supernatural being capable of doing great harm and if propitiated in due form equally capable of great beneficence, is common to both the cultures: only the method of propitiation seems to have undergone a change, perhaps on account of the necessity of relaxing the uncompromising insistence upon the correct performance of elaborate ritual of the sacrifices to meet the needs of a wider circle of clientele. There is evidence¹ that the Aryans on their move to the Gangetic basin came in contact with the tribes inhabiting the other side of the Vindhya mountains at an early date.

Again, some of the writings found at Mohenjodaro have been recently deciphered and the numerals discovered shown to bear no connection with the Aryan system of figures, on the contrary these are analogous to the Dravidian numerals. This finding as yet awaits confirmation, but if it is established, the entire history of ancient India may have to be rewritten.

¹ Atharva-Veda V. 22,14; Aitareya-Brahmana VII. 18,2; VIII. 22,1.

Here it will be worth the while to consider in this connection the application of Professor Taylor's migration-zone theory, that the region where a given type is now found purest is not where it originated but the outer limit to which its migration flowed, its 'margin.' Accordingly the first flow of migration might have been from the South to the North as contended by Keane and Morris in their theory of the Indo-African-Australian origin of Tamils. This is supported by the dictum that there existed once a vast continent extending as far as Africa and Australia and including within it South India, Ceylon and the Malay Archipelago. This vast continent of Lemuria, now forming the bed of the Indian Ocean, is claimed to be the seat of the earliest civilization. There is also the Sumero-Accadian-Elamite theory based on the Sumerians' resemblance to the Dravidian ethnic type of India, which theory corroborates the existence of ethnic affinity between the Tamils and the early inhabitants of the Euphrates and Tigris Valley. Dr. Hall explicitly stipulates that it is by no means improbable that the Sumerians were an Indian type which passed by land, or perhaps by sea, through Persia to the valley of the two rivers.

Indeed, the plateau of South India may have been the first home of this race, and from its base the march was continued towards North right up to Egypt. Curiously enough, the ancient Egyptians had a tradition that their original home was Punt, eastwards across the seas. In this north-west march the site of Mohenjodaro may have been the first camping ground, but being easily accessible to the Aryans of the Indo-

Gangetic plain, the land of seven rivers (Sapta Sindhu), the new town may have been aryanised effectively at an early date by the first of the settlers. At the same time their own culture absorbed the customs and beliefs of the original inhabitants from the South, the acceptance and practice of which rites gave Hinduism its later forms.

Whereas it is now accepted that the Aryan immigration was a process rather than a single irruption, for the hymns of the Rig-Veda reveal a changing civilization and a people uncertain of many things, most of the modern historians believe that there were two waves of Aryan migration. The one consisting of the dolichocephalic or long-headed people, the Rishis, the type which at present is represented by the Punjabis, Jats and Afghans, came to India later; while the brachycephalic or the broad-headed people, who are now represented by the Sindhis, Gujaratis, Mahrattas and Bengalis, entered India first and occupied the valley of the Sindhu (Indus), the Vipas (Bias) and the Satadru (Sutlej), the chief rivers that are addressed as divinities in the Rig-Veda. These people were probably the founders of the Mohenjodaro civilization of the fourth layer, which supplies the missing link in the story of cultural evolution in India.

The stone implements discovered at Mohenjodaro and far up in the North on the course of the Sohan in Pathoar territory and more recently in Kangra Valley, also indicate that the earliest Aryans had settled down to village life long before the Iron age in chalcolithic period, i.e. in the transitional period between the Neolithic age and the Copper age.

THE TEACHING OF PHILOSOPHY FOR WORLD-CITIZENSHIP

BY PROF. S. N. L. SHRIVASTAVA, M.A.

True philosophy, like everything genuine and elemental, is, if not a kind of atavism, at least a search for the true homeland of the soul.

—Prof. Wilbur Marshall Urban

The kernel of philosophy is not the difficulties or the obscurantisms, but a metaphysical and moral pith which constitutes the essence of all philosophy whatsoever.

—Prof. R. D. Ranade

It augurs well for the future of our country that the problem of educational reconstruction has come in the focus of attention of our national leaders. The whole country is stirred, as it were, with an eagerness to launch new schemes in the sphere of educational experiment. In a country where technological training has for long been woefully neglected, it is but natural that her people in the first flush of their enthusiasm for an educational reform must put a central emphasis on 'basic craft' and things like that and advocate an education with a vocational bias. But all this, howsoever necessary, does not nonsuit the usefulness of 'higher education' which, apart from any vocational preparation, aims at the training of the mind and the moulding of personality. Eminent educationists all the world over are now trying to make education an instrument for a great moral preparation and the widening of outlook, principally to make it an effective instrument for the promotion of international goodwill and peace. In a world demented by racial and colour prejudices and torn to pieces by inordinate political ambitions, the

inculcation of international-mindedness must be viewed as the highest desideratum of all true 'higher' education. 'It is the duty of the learned,' said Goldsmith, 'to unite society more closely and to persuade them to become citizens of the world.' This sense of world-citizenship is the imperative need of to-day. If education succeeds in promoting it, the course of human civilization shall be taking a new turn indeed. It is not sufficiently realized that philosophy, taught in the proper spirit and manner, can go a long way towards the fulfilment of this high endeavour. Teachers of philosophy, I am afraid, do not make the most of their sacred jobs and allow the valuable opportunity of moulding the character of young persons to slip carelessly away from their hands. It is a matter of thousand regrets that students—and the number of such students is legion—even after going through a course in philosophy for two or more years at a university do not succeed in rising to a sense of world-citizenship. If it does so happen, surely the fault lies in the teacher and his way of teaching and also to a very large extent, as the experience of the present writer as a teacher has shown him, in the faulty and inadequate syllabuses prescribed by our universities. If the teacher makes a right endeavour in the direction of creating in the minds of his students a genuine love for philosophical studies and contemplation and in inculcating in them the habit of assiduous philosophical searching, it is sure to inspire them with the idea of world-loyalty and give

them world-consciousness. Now, before we take this question of the right method of teaching philosophy and the prescription of suitable syllabuses for students at universities, we have to answer a prior question: what is philosophy and how does it arouse in its students world-consciousness?

Philosophy, as distinguished from the sciences, physical or mental, is a synoptic study of reality, a comprehensive and constructive survey of the universe as a whole; in short, a world-view. Different world-views, of course, are given by different systems of philosophy, surveying the world from different angles of vision, but what is of educative value to the student is that his mind makes an expansive sweep in thought over the whole range of reality and learns to impart a unity and a co-ordination to the apparently distinct and diverse elements of experience. In the constant endeavour to contemplate the whole, the pursuer of philosophy sheds all cramping parochialism and narrow-minded convictions. He does not see the particulars of *here* and *now* as mere discrete and disconnected particulars, but as instances of a universal. This habit of appraising the universal in the particulars frees the mind from any dogmatic over-estimation of one particular as compared to other particulars. A mind thus trained must see the universal Man in men of all ages, races and climes—the same universal humanity in them all, and therefore shall wish the same justice and kindness for all. The Hon. Mr. Bertrand Russell rightly observes: 'The mind which has become accustomed to the freedom and impartiality of philosophic contemplation will preserve something of the same freedom and impartiality in the world of action and emotion. It will view its purposes and desires as parts of the whole, with the absence of insistence

that results from seeing them as infinitesimal fragments in a world of which all the rest is unaffected by any one man's deeds. The impartiality which, in contemplation, is the unalloyed desire for truth, is the very same quality of mind which, in action, is justice, and in emotion is that universal love which can be given to all, and not only to those who are judged useful or admirable. Thus contemplation enlarges not only the objects of our thoughts but also the objects of our actions and our affections: it makes us citizens of the universe, not only of one walled city at war with all the rest. In this citizenship of the Universe consists man's true freedom, and his liberation from the thralldom of man's hopes and fears.' The philosopher, the 'spectator,' as he is in Plato's magnificent words, 'of all time and of all existence,' breaks all barriers of clime and nationality in his affections for the human kind and in his quest and conquest of truth. It is only when man is taught to make a philosophic approach to the vital problems of life that he can be expected to rise above his narrow loyalties and shed the passions and prejudices to which the accidents of his birth and immediate surroundings make him an heir.

It is unfortunate that there should be wide-spread prejudices against philosophy which, in fact, has immense educative value in being the instrument for the widest expansion of the human mind and outlook. The only gain from philosophical studies, it is often said, is to habituate the mind to see things cloudily or in a golden haze of obscurities and uncertainties, to raise problems which cannot be answered, and to perplex the mind for ever in a 'strife of systems.' A detailed discussion on

¹ *The Problems of Philosophy* p. 240.

the meaning, method and scope of philosophy would certainly not be germane to the purposes of the present essay, but a few words here *en passant* to clear misunderstandings about the nature and the validity of philosophical knowledge and the worth-whileness of the speculative pursuit will not be out of place. To the uninitiated, of course, philosophy with its unfamiliar technical verbiage—and this in itself is no discredit to philosophy, for every *exact* science which would not suffer violence to its exactness necessarily develops a technical nomenclature—appears but ‘a cloud of unknowing,’ and this can’t be helped! What science has not its own technical phraseology? Then, why this hue and cry against philosophy alone? But the misunderstandings, pardonable as they are, of the uninitiated apart, the pursuers of philosophy are themselves asking at the present day the question whether philosophy, as distinct from the sciences, is at all a body of valid knowledge and whether the grand arches of speculative ‘systems’ rest at all on solid pillars of certainty and ascertainable truths. Although an elucidation of the concept of philosophy is a main ingredient in the fermentation of contemporary philosophical discussions, nothing definite seems to have yet emerged out of it. The present writer, however, has always held that though philosophers *profess* to pursue different methods, yet, philosophy, as the reflective understanding of reality, has and *can have* but *one* method and *one* which *can yield* an indisputably valid body of knowledge. The method of philosophy may be described as a reflective explication of the fundamental principles and ideals (and also values—as modern thought is now showing, and rightly too, increasing concern for value problems) implicated in our experience. Philosophy does not give

us new ‘facts’ about the objects of the world as other sciences do, but it makes us aware of the structural connections and the fundamental and significant implications of our intelligible experience. Of course, ‘experience’ for any fruitful and adequate philosophy must mean that inclusive whole within which is the diversity of our perceptual, conceptual, moral, religious and aesthetic experiences. As this experience is immediate and organic to our consciousness, philosophical truths which are nothing but explications of fundamental principles and ideals implicated or woven into the very tissues of this experience, are self-authenticated and veridical. No extraneous criteria are needed to establish the veracity or certitude of the findings of philosophy. Experience, in being ‘lived through’ veridically communicates to us the fundamental principles that are implicated in its fabric, and that is the *raison d’être* of philosophy and the indisputable ground of veracity of all philosophical formulations. Of course, there may be and are, many philosophical statements and arguments which are hopelessly wrong and unacceptable, but that should be no reason for concluding that all philosophical truths in their very nature lack veracity.

Now, the objection that philosophy raises problems which cannot be answered rests on a confusion about the nature of philosophical problems on the one hand, and the limits of philosophical knowledge, on the other. If philosophy raises problems about what are *ex hypothesi* beyond our intelligible experience, then such problems must, in the very nature of things, be unanswerable. But philosophy would be going beyond its legitimate bounds and off its proper path if it postulated or talked about principles which are

avowedly trans-experience. A very misleading feature of Kant's philosophy is his admission of supposedly trans-experience principles or mere 'postulates' as he calls them. In this Kant not only deviated from what should be the proper method of philosophy but was precisely wrong in concluding that his ideas of Reason (self, God etc.) were mere postulates and never formed the *factual* contents of experience.

The misunderstanding that philosophy dabbles in insoluble problems also rests, to a very large extent, on thinking that philosophy must give us a knowledge about the universe so complete as to border on omniscience. Such an extravagant expectation of the results of philosophical knowledge must inevitably meet with disappointment. A certain amount of inscrutability about the ultimate truth of the universe must always remain after the utmost searching by the human mind.

By far the most telling objection, however, against philosophy is said to be its own internal distraction, disagreement amongst philosophers and schools of philosophies. 'It is commonly said to-day,' writes Professor John Laird 'that philosophy, distracted herself, is peculiarly distracting to any one who would woo her.' Much of the force of this objection would seem to be vanishing away into thin air if only we remembered that there are different and divergent schools of thought in art and poetry also and that we have never for this reason thought that poetry or art serves no useful purpose. And if poetry, art and other pursuits be deemed worthy of man, why should philosophy be viewed with less respect? Well has Bradley said: 'And so, when poetry, art, and religion have ceased wholly to interest, or when they show no longer any tendency to struggle with ultimate problems and to come to an

understanding with them; when the sense of mystery and enchantment no longer draws the mind to wander aimlessly and to love it knows not what; when in short, twilight has no charm—then metaphysics will be worthless." This however, it may be said, is not a straight answer to the objection raised. Is there, after all, it will be asked, any ghost of a chance for philosophy demolishing its heterogeneous multiplicity and assuming the shape of *one* eternal philosophy, a *philosophia perennis* which shall command universal assent? Well, time alone will show whether this consummation, which ought reasonably to be hoped for, shall ever be reached or not.³ Meanwhile, a student of contemporary philosophical thought does not find the situation so very disappointing. The boundary lines that used to mark off distinctly schools of thought from one another are now vanishing away. Take the age-old opposition between Realism and Idealism. These terms, as Bosanquet has aptly remarked, are now 'traditional battle-cries and watchwords, rather than names of precision.' According to Prof. John Laird 'any realism defined to the quick becomes nothing but the definer's private philosophy, and that the term itself cannot signify more than an attitude and a tendency.'⁴ In the admission of 'values' as components of reality, in the admission of the autonomy and veracity of religious experience and such other things, the various schools of contem-

³ *Appearance and Reality* p. 3.

⁴ In India we have long been familiar with the conception that our six systems of philosophies, in spite of their disparities, are not without an organic unity. They have been spoken of as the different limbs of the same bodily organism. As they set forth higher and higher world-perspectives, they are compared to steps in a staircase, one higher than the other, the highest being the Vedanta.

⁵ *A Study in Realism* p. 2.

porary philosophy, realist or idealist, voluntarist or pragmatist, pluralist or absolutist, do cover a common ground.

But it is time now that I should pass on from this digression—necessary though it has been—to my present theme viz. the educative value of philosophical studies in breaking down the barriers of all parochial thinking and in attuning the mind to view things from a universal standpoint. Philosophy, being a constructive interpretation of the *universal* experience of man, is best fitted for training the mind to this end. Philosophy, with its catholicity and width of vision, with its constant endeavour to get behind the appearances and discover the deeper meanings and significances of life and experience, has an uplifting influence over the mind, which enables it to soar high enough at an altitude whence the ‘smallness’ of our narrow affections and loyalties can be seen.

Why then, it will be asked, do so many of the graduates who have studied philosophy at the universities not show broadness and international-mindedness which are expected of them? The answer lies, as I said at the beginning, in the inability of the teacher to instil proper inspiration into his students and to create around him the atmosphere of true philosophical thinking, in the faulty manner of teaching prevalent in our universities, and in the ill-considered courses that many of our universities prescribe for the various examinations. A word of suggestion as to how the teaching of philosophy may be done to the best advantage will not, I hope, be regarded out of place. In the first place, I would wish the teachers of philosophy to *stimulate thinking*, to arouse the impulse of inquiry, to confront the students with problems and allow *them* to struggle for solutions. ‘The greatest teacher,’ said Sister

Nivedita, ‘is not he who can tell us most, but he who leads us to ask the deepest questions.’ The teaching of any subject, howsoever ennobling it may be, is apt to be abortive of the highest cultural and educational values if it is calculated to produce when the teacher fails to infuse any *inspiration* into the heart and soul of his pupils. This is unfortunately a sadly neglected thing in the educational system of our country where only a soulless memorising of facts for being reproduced at examinations is almost all that counts.

Next in importance to this is the content, the fund of knowledge that is imparted. This should be both adequate and inviting, adequate in range and extent and presented in forms which can be understood and appreciated and enjoyed by students. Herein I touch the question of the syllabuses or ‘courses’ that are usually prescribed for the different classes in our universities. The present writer has often wondered at the thoughtlessness with which this is generally done. Space will not permit me to discuss this question in detail. I take, by way of illustration, the course prescribed for our B.A. Examinations in history of European philosophy. To the best knowledge of the writer, Hegel generally marks the terminus of courses prescribed for these examinations by our universities; and these courses have the name of ‘modern’ philosophy given to them. Sensible persons may well pause to consider whether Hegel be the terminus or the beginning in any course of *modern* philosophy. What about the schools of philosophy which are ‘modern’ in *excelesis*—the Neo-Hegelian Idealism, Pragmatism, the New Realism, the School of Mathematical Logic, the philosophy of Natural Science among whose exponents may be counted Oliver Lodge, Arthur S. Eddington, James

Jeans, J. A. Thomson, J. S. Haldane and others, and the new school of Theism and philosophy of Religion? Could any course in philosophy pretending to be *modern* ignore these? The history of philosophy from Descartes to Hegel, instead of figuring—as it has been doing hitherto—as the entire bulk of modern philosophy, should now be treated as simply the propaedeutic to the study of modern philosophy properly so called. Why not text-books suitable for B.A. students be written from this perspective? That will bring the students in direct contact with the living currents of contemporary thought and make their knowledge really up-to-date. I am sure, if courses are so designed, they will prove an inviting fare to the students. I do not, of course, here mean to suggest that the valuable elements in the older tradition of thought be considered less important or significant; on the other hand, it will be conducive to their *fuller* understanding if they are seen in contrast to the modern reactions against them.

And lastly, what is most important from the point of promoting international-mindedness is the study of

world philosophies. In literature and art, we know there are some series of volumes putting together the notable achievements of all countries such as *the World Classics*, *the Best Short Stories of the World*, *the Best Plays of the World*, *the Best Paintings of the World*, and so on; but we do not know of any volume or series of volumes presenting the best philosophies of the East and the West. Once the need is felt, I am sure attempts will be made in this direction. The value of comparative study of philosophies, Eastern and Western, both for Easterners and Westerners, cannot be over-estimated. How I wish there were a really *international* journal of philosophy! The *Mind* and other accredited journals of philosophy in the West which are popular in the academic circles of this country do not usually (in fact *never*, with very rare exceptions) contain articles on oriental philosophy from the pen of oriental writers. Thanks to the catholicity of the Indian mind, the Indian journals show a commendable freedom from this exclusivist tendency. Let us hope the future holds in store better things for us.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE PARABLES OF JESUS

BY PROF. GOUR GOVINDA GUPTA

Almost the very first thing that He says about the Kingdom is:—

‘The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say “lo here or lo there!” for behold the Kingdom of Heaven is within you.’

By this He means to say that it is not a place lying somewhere outside, to be obtained by man in response to his yearnings, or as a recompense for his efforts of piety and his so-called religious performances in this life. It is already existent in our hearts if only we would look for it with faith and sincerity.

Then again:—

‘The Kingdom of God is like unto seeds sown by a sower—some falling by the wayside, some in stony places, some among thorns and some into good ground.’

It is the word of God in the mouth of the Prophet, the Messiah, His very elect, whom He sends down to the earth to declare Himself unto men to be received and realized by them. Some lose it through ignorance and neglect, some fail to retain it for fear of persecution and tribulation, some allow it to die out under the pressure of physical and material desires while a few alone are able to receive the word in their aspiring souls, cherish it with love and care and are rewarded with the Spirit of Love, Joy and Power of God.

Further:—

‘The Kingdom of God is like unto leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened.’

It may begin as a vague yearning, a sort of heartache for the infinite, with the consequent unrest in an unknown corner of the soul, like some ferment of the soul, as it were, and one is unable to realize what has been taking place until the whole soul is leavened with madness for God.

And again:—

‘The Kingdom of God is like unto a treasure hid in a field which when a man hath found he hideth and for joy thereof, goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field.’

The experience of God may come to one as a sudden revelation in his soul, of something that would give him the greatest joy, and to possess which, therefore, he would be but too ready to forgo his dearest possessions and cherish it with the sacrifice of all material interests.

Or further:—

‘The Kingdom of God is like unto a merchant seeking goodly pearls, who when he had found one of greatest price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.’

The vision of God to one who has learned to value the things of the spirit and has spent his days in search of the highest is apt to send one into rapture when all on a sudden he receives the illumination he had so long been looking for; and he comes to make a revaluation of all values and to cherish in the inmost recesses of his heart his novel experience of God as the only invaluable possession in life.

Further still:—

"The Kingdom of Heaven is likened to a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the least of all seeds, but when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."

The revelation of the Light might have come to one by chance at some-time in the past and might also have been received and cherished by him with joy, so that being thus allowed to be concealed for a time in a corner of the soul, it is apt to grow quietly unknown to the man himself into a harvest of spiritual realizations that might be of help to others in need of spiritual help and comfort.

And again:—

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man which sowed good seed in his field but while men slept his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up and brought forth fruit then appeared the tares also, so the servants of the household came and told unto him, "Sir! didst thou not sow good seed in the fields from whence then hath it tares?" He said unto them, "An enemy hath done this." The servants said unto him, "Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?" But he said, "Nay, lest while ye gather up the tares ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, gather ye together, first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather then the wheat into my barn." "

The word of God might at one time have won the appreciation of a person but then came to be neglected and set aside for the time being in favour of worldly passions and material desires demanding insistent and immediate

satisfaction. But the mercy of God is so great that considering the frailty and vanity of human nature He would take compassion on him for his neglect and reward him for his choosing the word for once at least and cherishing it for a time; for He knows it for certain that a time will come when the glow of spiritual fire will consume all his frail desires in the form of a fire of repentance.

But again:—

"The Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto ten virgins which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom and five of them were wise and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps but no oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps."

It requires sufficient faith and wakefulness of spirit to be able to receive the grace and power of God. The lamp of faith must always be kept burning in the heart. One may, of course, be sure that God is ever ready to pour down His grace on us but He always has His own time for it. So that unless one is always on the alert and strong enough to receive the power of His spirit with a living faith, one is apt to be sorely disappointed when others with a stronger faith are able to receive the fulness of His grace. In short we must always wait with an enduring faith for the grace of God.

And also:—

"The Kingdom of Heaven is as a man travelling into a far country who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two and to another one, to every man according to his several ability; and straight way took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same and made them other five talents and likewise he that

had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and reckoned with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents saying, "Lord! thou delivered unto me five talents, behold! I have gained beside them five talents more." His Lord said unto him, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler of many things: enter thou into the joy of the lord." Likewise said he to the man who had traded with the two talents. But he was angry with the man who had hid his talent in the earth and came and returned it to him, and ordered that the talent be taken from him and the unprofitable servant cast into utter darkness.

We must ever remember that we are all of us but so many channels through which the Ocean of Divine Life creates opportunities to flow back into Itself with Its ever fruitful creation in Its bosom heaving with joy and plenty. It becomes each one of us therefore to put his ability to the very best use possible and thus fulfil the creative purpose of God, winning for oneself the Joy Eternal, instead of allowing the water of life to get choked up and stagnate for want of application and bring on oneself utter barrenness and ruin thereby.

To put it more simply we must always aspire for His bountiful grace with a heart ever active in prayer to receive the same and thus be fit to inherit the very power of God.

But of course:—

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is an householder who went out early in the morning to hire labourers

for his vine-yard and agreed with them for a penny a day; and again went out and hired some at the third hour, some about the sixth hour and some again at the eleventh hour telling them in each case, "Whatever is right, I will give you," and when evening was come paid them the same wages to the surprise of them all. But when they received it, they murmured against the good man of the house saying, "These last have wrought but one hour and thou hast made them equal unto us which have borne the burden and heat of the day." But he answered one of them and said, "Friend! I do thee no wrong; didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Take what thine is and go thy way, I will give unto this last even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? Is thine eye evil because I am good? So the last shall be first and the first last, for many be called but few chosen." "

Unknown are His ways of receiving persons into His grace. Some are made to work hard for it from early life, some at a later period and some later still, while others even at the very close of life; and yet all may be considered by Him to be fit to be blessed with His grace in the same manner. Even the very principle of 'give and take' which may be considered to be 'just' by man, may utterly be disregarded by Him, and His own mercy alone be found to govern all His workings. He who works desiringly gets the measure of his desire in return; but he who desires not and works hoping for nothing has the plenitude of grace in return.

Yet it ought to be remembered that:—"The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto the judge of the city to whom a widow came praying, "Avenge me of my adversary," and he would not for a while but afterwards he said within himself, "because the widow troubleth

me, I shall avenge her, lest by her continued coming she weary me!" And shall not God avenge His own elect who cry day and night unto Him?"

Faith in God must not be a temporary affair, a momentary or short-lived gleam of inspiration. It must be enduring and consuming enough to merit the grace and call of the Divine. One must always have to bear up under trials and sufferings of any kind and continually pray for His help till one be found to be strong enough and really deserving of it.

For again :—

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man who had two sons; and he came to the first and said, "Son! go and work in my vineyard." He answered and said, "I will not," but afterwards repented and went."

And also :—

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto the publican standing far off who would not lift up so much as his eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, "God! be merciful to me a sinner": while a Pharisee stood and prayed within himself, "God! I thank Thee that I am not as other men are." "

It is genuine and sincere faith alone that can win for a man the love and grace of God. The man who exerts himself for righteousness with a strong desire for reward in return makes but a poor show of faith, which is trifling worth in the sight of God. While the man who even after a life of sin and misery is thoroughly consumed and purified with the fire of repentance comes at once to be blessed with faith that is of sterling worth and makes straight away for the ever-loving care and grace of the Divine.

So that it must not also be forgotten that :—

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a certain king who made a marriage for

his son and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding, and they would not come. Again he sent forth other servants saying, "Tell them who are bidden, all things are ready, come into the marriage." But they made light of it and went their ways and the remnant took his servants, treated them spitefully and slew them, but when the king heard thereof, he was wrath, and sent forth his armies and destroyed the murderers and burned up their city. He then said, "They who were bidden were not worthy, go ye therefore unto the high ways and as many as ye shall find bid them to the marriage." So these servants went out and brought as many as they found, both good and bad, and the wedding was furnished with guests. And the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man who had not a wedding-garment and he saith unto him, "Friend! how comest thou in hither not having a wedding-garment?" and he was speechless. Then said the king to his servants, "Bind him hand and foot and take him away; cast him into outer darkness, there shall he weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called but few are chosen." "

There comes a time in the history of humanity when God, out of His bountiful love, thus opens the door of His heart with all the plenitude of grace by manifesting Himself in man as man, and many there be to whom the call is sent out to share with Him His Divine Joy. Of these some are too much mindful of this world to heed the call while there are others who would go so far as to treat the messenger of God with scorn, contempt and even enmity. The former may be left to themselves but the latter can scarcely escape the wrath of God. However the merciful God, who does not throw open the door of His grace in vain, would then freely receive into

His company all those who may sincerely desire His grace and love; but if they are not found to possess the mark of sincerity they are sure to be rejected for having desired to receive the power of God by stealth and cunning, cherishing other motives in their hearts and not the desire for the love of God for its own sake.

For this reason:—

‘The Kingdom of God is likened unto a net that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind which when it was full, they drew to shore and sat down and gathered the good into vessels but cast the bad away.’

The spiritual powers of the Divine have also their temptations for man; and some indeed are foolish enough to believe they can utilize them for material profit; and in going to do so bring about their own ruin. While a few there be who sincerely desire to have the love of God for its own sake and are accordingly received into His grace.

But the very first condition is that:—

‘Except one is born again, one cannot see the Kingdom of God.’

The presence and reign of God in the soul of man cannot however be possible until it is quickened into new life by the grace of God which again is not forthcoming unless the whole soul is thoroughly purged of its dross in the fire of repentance and transfused by a burning love for God.

And so also:—

‘Except ye be as little children ye shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.’

For:—

‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.’

God-vision can only be expected in a soul that is completely cleansed of all impurity and guile. And a guileless or spotless soul is a soul that is absolutely pure and innocent like the soul of a child. It may, therefore, be taken for certain that the child-hearted alone can aspire and hope for Divine illumination. It is the child alone that is free from all care for it knows only its parents and moves about with a spirit of utter surrender that is to be reckoned as the earnest of Divine love.

And then one comes to realize that:—

‘God is not the God of the dead but of the living.’

The Kingdom of Heaven is not a place where one can go to after death. It is not meant for dead souls but for ever-living and ever-active beings. God’s presence in the soul is a presence that is permanently felt. God-life is eternal life. It can as well be had in a body as without it. And once one tastes of this well of life he may be perfectly sure of a life that is immortal—the consciousness of having or not having a body being of no purpose to him. His life then comes to consist in the awareness of the constant presence of the Divine Spirit or the Power of God as one with his own being. He lives as God, moves as God, feels as God, and wills and works as God—living wherever God lives, moving whenever He moves, feeling as He feels and willing and working with Him as He would through Him as only a vessel of the communication of the Life Divine.

NAG MAHASHOY—THE PARAGON OF DEVOTEES

BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

Nag Mahashoy—that was the name by which Durga Charan Nag was popularly known—was, according to Swami Vivekananda, ‘one of the greatest of the works of Ramakrishna Paramahansa.’ He would say, ‘I have travelled far in different parts of the globe, but nowhere could I meet a great soul like Nag Mahashoy.’

The life of Nag Mahashoy reads like a fairy tale, like a legendary story. His humility, his hospitality, his kindness to all including lower animals, his asceticism and renunciation, above all his devotion to God and his Guru, were so wonderful that if we hear the incidents we become awe-struck and ask ourselves if they could be really true. Such stories can be found narrated in the Puranas, —and the modern mind does not know whether they were facts or simply imaginary illustrations of moral precepts,—but the happenings in the life of Nag Mahashoy were witnessed by persons who are still alive and stand as a living testimony to their authenticity.

Nag Mahashoy was born on the 21st of August 1846, in a small village called Deobhog, situated at a short distance from Narayangunj in the district of Dacca. His father’s name was Dindayal Nag, who was an employee in the firm of Messrs Rajkumar and Hari Charan Pal Chowdhury of Kumartuli in Calcutta. Dindayal was an orthodox, devout Hindu, and commanded respect from all for his piety. Though his pay was very low, the proprietors of the firm looked upon him as their family member rather than as an employee. They had unshakable faith

in his honesty, and it was justified by many wonderful incidents.

Nag Mahashoy lost his mother while very young, and was brought up by his widowed aunt—Dindayal’s sister, who was more like a mother to him and wielded a great influence over his future life.

From his childhood Nag Mahashoy showed great sweetness of disposition, and his nice appearance attracted the notice of all. He was of a philosophical temperament. In the evening the boy would be gazing listlessly at the starry sky, and say to his wondering aunt, ‘Let us go away to that region. I don’t feel at home here.’ The sight of the moon would make him dance with joy, and in plants waving in the wind he would find a friend and playmate.

He was fond of hearing Puranic stories told by his aunt. Sometimes they would stir his imagination so much that he would see them exactly in dreams.

Nag Mahashoy was noted for his great truthfulness even from his childhood. He would rarely go in for plays: but if at all he would join them, he would not tolerate any player telling a lie. In that case he would stop conversation with the culprit until the latter was repentant. The boy Durga Charan was the constant arbiter in case of quarrels among his companions, such was their confidence in his judgement and sobriety. He was beloved of all—young and old.

With growing age Nag Mahashoy developed a great thirst for knowledge. After finishing his primary education,

Nag Mahashoy was in a fix as to how to pursue his further study. To go to Calcutta to his father was not possible, as the family income was very meagre. But study must be continued. So Nag Mahashoy began to attend a school at Dacca, covering every day a distance of twenty miles on foot in sun and rain. It is said that Nag Mahashoy absented himself from the school only for two days in the course of the fifteen months he was there. Though the strain to study under such a condition was severe, Nag Mahashoy's love for learning carried him through. Not a word of complaint could be heard from him, though his sufferings at times would be of alarming nature.

Within a short period of his school life at Dacca, Nag Mahashoy mastered the Bengali language, and wrote also a book for children.

Nag Mahashoy was now married through the insistence of his aunt who was anxious to see the motherless boy soon settled in life.

Five months after the marriage Nag Mahashoy came to Calcutta to live with his father and got himself admitted into the Campbell Medical School. But here also he could not study more than a year and a half. He then studied Homoeopathy under Doctor Behari Lal Bhaduri, who was greatly charmed with the amiable disposition of his student.

As Nag Mahashoy lived mostly in Calcutta, and his wife was at her father's house, he did not come much in contact with her. Even while he would be at home, it is said, he would sometimes pass the night climbing up a tree in order to avoid the company of his wife, so mortally afraid was he of falling into the snares of worldly life. His wife, however, died suddenly. This gave him a great shock, but from another standpoint he felt relief.

Even while studying Homoeopathy

Nag Mahashoy started medical practice impelled by a desire to remove the sufferings of the poor patients of the locality. Soon his name as a successful doctor spread, and crowds of poor people would throng at his door every day. Nag Mahashoy lost no opportunity to give succour to the poor people. So great was his spirit of service and so large was his heart that unscrupulous people could easily take advantage of his goodness.

At this time Nag Mahashoy came in contact with Suresh Chandra Datta, afterwards a great devotee of Sri Ramakrishna. From the first meeting they became intimate friends. Suresh was Brahmo by temperament and did not believe in Hindu deities. Though their religious views were as poles asunder, still, strange to say, they loved each other dearly. Suresh was struck with the spotless character of his friend.

Gradually Nag Mahashoy began to lose interest in medicine, and his attention was devoted to the study of scriptures and the practice of religion. He would daily take bath in the Ganges, and find delight in discussing religious problems with Pandits. Often he would go to the cremation ground near by, and remain there till dead of night brooding over the unreality of the world. His invariable conclusion would be—God only is real, everything else is vanity of vanities. Life is in vain if God is not realized.

Sometimes he would pass long hours in meditation in the cremation ground. Once in the course of meditation he had some spiritual experience; this spurred him on to continue the practice.

Seeing this changed behaviour of Nag Mahashoy, his father got alarmed lest he should give up worldly life. He thought marriage would cure the religious malady of his son. So Dindayal selected a bride for his son, and insisted

upon the marriage. Nag Mahashoy piteously pleaded with his father not to throw him into worldly life and thus hamper the growth of his spiritual progress, but Dindayal knew no argument. At last the devoted son yielded to the wishes of his father, but how great was the anguish of his heart! From the depth of his heart went the prayer to the Almighty that his marriage might not prove a bondage to him. A severe storm blowing over his mind, Nag Mahashoy meekly followed his father to his native village, got himself married, and after a few days' stay at home returned to Calcutta.

Nag Mahashoy hated the idea of taking service under anybody. So he thought of settling down as a doctor. Now he began to accept fees, if offered. But he would never demand money from anybody. Rather he would refuse money if offered in excess of his legitimate dues. Once Nag Mahashoy cured a very critical case at the house of the employers of his father. They offered him rich presents, but he would not accept them, as the cost of the medicine together with his fees was not so much. This enraged Dindayal living as he did under straitened circumstances. But Nag Mahashoy was firm; he said it would be practising untruth if he would accept anything more than his dues. Sometimes he would help the poor patients with money from his own pocket. Once one of his patients was suffering from lack of sufficient clothings. Nag Mahashoy gave him his own woollen wrapper and ran away from his presence, lest it should be refused. Such acts invited sharp reproof from his father, but Nag Mahashoy found it impossible to change his mode of conduct. Nag Mahashoy had an extensive practice. Had he been worldly-wise he could easily amass money. But on the contrary Nag

Mahashoy remained poor as ever—sometimes he would find it difficult to make both ends meet.

But even humanitarian works cannot satisfy a heart that is longing for God-vision. After all how little can be done in the matter of removing misery from the world! Though Nag Mahashoy gave himself up completely to the service of the poor and the distressed, he was panting for direct perception of the Reality behind the phenomenal world.

At this time Nag Mahashoy along with Suresh and some Brahmo devotees would regularly practise meditation sitting on the bank of the Ganges. But the thought that without formal initiation from a Guru spiritual progress cannot be achieved oppressed the mind of Nag Mahashoy. Strangely enough, one day while Nag Mahashoy was bathing in the Ganges, he found his family preceptor coming in a boat. At this Nag Mahashoy was glad beyond measure; for, what he was seeking for presented itself. Nag Mahashoy got himself initiated from him. After the initiation Nag Mahashoy devoted much greater attention to religious practices. It is said while he was once in meditation sitting on the bank of the Ganges, there came the flood-tide and swept him away, so deeply absorbed was he. It was only after some time that he got back his consciousness and swam across to the shore.

Suresh once heard in the Brahmo Samaj of Keshab Chandra Sen that there was a great saint living at the temple-garden of Dakshineswar. When the news was communicated to Nag Mahashoy, he was anxious to see him that very day. When Suresh and Nag Mahashoy came to Dakshineswar, somebody gave them the false information that Ramakrishna was away. At this both were sorely disappointed.

With a heavy heart they were about to come back, when they observed someone beckoning them from within the doors. They went inside. Lo, it was Ramakrishna sitting on a small bedstead! Suresh saluted him with folded palms. Nag Mahashoy wanted to take the dust of his feet, but Ramakrishna did not allow it. This greatly grieved him; embodiment of humility as he was, Nag Mahashoy thought he was not pure enough to touch the feet of a saint.

Ramakrishna inquired of their whereabouts, whether they had married, etc. and remarked, "Live in the world unattached. Be in the world, but not of it. Just see that the dirt of the world does not touch you." Nag Mahashoy was looking steadfast at the face of Ramakrishna, when the latter asked, "What are you seeing this way?" Nag Mahashoy replied, "I have come to see you, hence I am looking at you."

Talking with them for a while, Ramakrishna asked them to go to Panchavati and meditate. They obeyed him, and when they returned after meditation, Ramakrishna took them with him to show round the temples. Ramakrishna was ahead while Suresh and Nag Mahashoy followed him. After passing through other temples, when Ramakrishna entered the Kali Temple, he was all on a sudden a changed man. He behaved just like a child before its mother.

Suresh and Nag Mahashoy took leave of Ramakrishna in the afternoon. Ramakrishna asked them to repeat the visit so that the acquaintance might deepen.

While returning, the only thought which possessed the mind of Nag Mahashoy was, What could that man be—a Sadhu, a saint or some higher being!

This meeting with Ramakrishna inflamed the hunger of Nag Mahashoy for

God-realization. He now forgot all other things about the world. He avoided the company of people. He was always silent—absorbed within his own thoughts. Only when Suresh did come, he would talk with him—and that about Ramakrishna.

About a week after the first visit the two friends again came to Dakshineswar. Nag Mahashoy was, as it were, in a frenzied condition. Seeing him Ramakrishna fell into ecstasy and burst out, "So glad to see you; it is for you that I am here." Then he seated Nag Mahashoy by his side, caressed him, and said, "What fear have you? Yours is a highly developed spiritual condition." That day also Ramakrishna sent them to the Panchavati for meditation. After a while Ramakrishna came to them, and directed Nag Mahashoy to do him some personal services. Nag Mahashoy was so glad. His only sorrow was that he was not allowed to take the dust of the feet of the Master on the occasion of the first visit. This day when Ramakrishna was alone with Suresh, he remarked that Nag Mahashoy was like a blazing fire.

The next time Nag Mahashoy went to Dakshineswar alone. To-day also Ramakrishna was in ecstasy at the sight of Nag Mahashoy, and began to murmur something inaudible. At this condition of Ramakrishna, Nag Mahashoy got afraid, when Ramakrishna said to him, "Well, just see what is the trouble in my feet; you are a doctor, you can examine that." Seeing Ramakrishna talking in a normal condition, Nag Mahashoy was relieved. He examined the feet, but found nothing. Ramakrishna asked him to examine again, and that thoroughly. Nag Mahashoy thought it an opportunity offered to him to touch the feet of the Master, which he so greatly longed for.

Afterwards Nag Mahashoy would remark, 'There was no need of asking for anything from Ramakrishna. He could read the mind of his devotees, and give them what they sincerely wanted.'

Henceforth Nag Mahashoy had the firm conviction that Ramakrishna was God incarnate. He would say, 'After a few visits only, I understood him to be an incarnation of God.' If asked how he could do that, he would say, 'He himself was gracious enough to make me feel that. Even after hard austerities of thousands of years God cannot be realized without His grace.'

Once Ramakrishna asked Nag Mahashoy as to what he thought of him. Nag Mahashoy replied in folded hands, 'Through your grace I have known what you are.' On this answer Ramakrishna went into Samadhi and placed his right foot on the chest of Nag Mahashoy. The latter felt a peculiar change within him and saw as if everything around was bathed in a flood of Divine Light.

One day, while Nag Mahashoy was sitting before Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda (then Narendra Nath) entered the room. Ramakrishna told Narendra, pointing to Nag Mahashoy, 'He has got genuine humility. There is no hypocrisy behind it.' Soon there began a conversation between the two disciples, in the course of which Nag Mahashoy said, 'Everything is done by the will of God. Only the ignorant say they are the doers.' Narendra, practising Advaita as he did, said, 'I don't believe in "He." I am everything. The whole universe is my manifestation.' Nag Mahashoy replied, 'You cannot make one black hair grey, what to talk of the universe. Not a leaf in a tree moves without His will.' The conversation went on in this strain, which Ramakrishna greatly enjoyed.

Ramakrishna then said to Nag Mahashoy, 'Well, he is a blazing fire. He may say thus.' From that time Nag Mahashoy had supreme regard for Swami Vivekananda and his spiritual greatness.

Whatever Ramakrishna uttered, even if in joke, was gospel truth to Nag Mahashoy. Once Nag Mahashoy heard Ramakrishna saying to a devotee, 'Well, doctors, lawyers, and brokers can hardly achieve anything in the domain of religion.' That was enough. Nag Mahashoy threw his medical books and medicines into the Ganges and gave up the practice.

The news reached Dindayal at his village home. He became upset and ran to Calcutta. Nag Mahashoy could not be persuaded to take up the medical profession again. Dindayal requested his employers to put Nag Mahashoy in his place, which they did. And then Dindayal returned home with a sigh of relief.

This occupation gave Nag Mahashoy greater leisure and opportunity for meditation and spiritual practices. He began to frequent Dakshineswar more often, as a result of which his spirit of renunciation increased and he was determined to give up the world. With such intention one day he went to Ramakrishna, and as soon as he entered his room, Ramakrishna began to say in an ecstatic mood, 'What is the harm in remaining in the world? If the mind is fixed on God, one is safe. Remain in the world like Janaka and set an example to the householders.' Nag Mahashoy was stupefied. He was resolved to leave the world, but the obstacle came from the very man whose life aroused in him the desire. What could be done! Nag Mahashoy's opinion was, 'What escaped from the lips of Ramakrishna none could resist. He would say in a word or two the path

which was suitable for a particular man.' So Nag Mahashoy returned home, obeying the behest of Ramakrishna.

But it was impossible for Nag Mahashoy to do the normal duties of life any longer. Day and night he was in agony as God was not realized. Sometime he would roll in dust, sometime he would fall on thorny bush which caused injury. He forgot all about food. When Suresh would come, he would force him to eat, otherwise he would be without food. He would return home some time in the afternoon, some time at dead of night. He behaved like one deranged in mind.

During this period Nag Mahashoy had to go to his village home. When his wife found him in this mental state, she was terrified. She easily understood that Nag Mahashoy had no vestige of desire for worldly life. Nag Mahashoy also explained to her that fixed as all his thoughts were on God, it was no longer possible for him to live a worldly life.

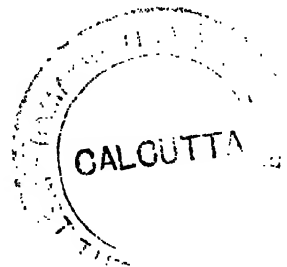
How abnormal—if abnormal it should be at all termed—was Nag Mahashoy's conduct at this period, can be seen from the following incident. In the corner of their house, Nag Mahashoy's sister grew a gourd-plant. Once a cow was tied near it. The cow wanted to eat the plant but could not reach it. Nag Mahashoy saw this and felt compassion for the cow. He untied it and allowed it to eat the plant. This naturally enraged his father, who

rebuked him saying, 'You yourself will not earn money, and on the contrary you will do what will bring loss to the family. You have given up medical practice. How will you maintain yourself?' Nag Mahashoy said, 'Please don't worry about that. God will look after me.' The infuriated father said, 'Yes, I know. Now you will go about naked and live on frogs.'

Nag Mahashoy gave no further answer, threw away his clothes, brought a dead frog, and while eating it said to his father, 'Both of your commandments are fulfilled. No longer please worry about me, this is my earnest request.' Thinking that his son had gone mad, Dindayal told his daughter-in-law, 'Let none go against his wishes even to the slightest degree.'

After returning to Calcutta, Nag Mahashoy, in one of his visits to Dakshineswar, expressed great sorrow to Ramakrishna that he had no real self-surrender to God, that he still believed in the efficacy of his own personal effort, apart from the will of God. Ramakrishna consoled him with kindly advice. Seeing the burning spirit of Vairagya in him, Sri Ramakrishna again advised him to remain in the world. Nag Mahashoy said that the sight of misery all around oppressed him too much. Ramakrishna told him that no taint would touch him if he remained in the world, on the contrary everybody would be amazed to see his life.

(To be continued)



NOTES AND COMMENTS

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

In his convocation address at the Aligarh University, Sir Sultan Ahmad observed that the destinies of the two great communities of India are closely linked together and strongly emphasized the need for co-operation and the pooling of energies for the reconstruction of a better India. He said: "This deplorable state of affairs must disappear completely if we want progress of any sort in India. It was expected that in the face of the present danger these differences would be forgotten, and then under the influence of a united effort disappear permanently.

'After all individuals are differently constituted, yet they do co-operate and work harmoniously together. Why should not communities with certain distinct and different religions do so? There is no gainsaying the fact that racially and politically we are all Indians, we breathe in the same atmosphere and

till the same land. We are inheritors of the same old proud civilization and whatever we may privately think and aspire after, our destinies are linked together. Our political and social salvation can only lie in both Hindus and Muslims pooling their energies together for the reconstruction of a better India.

'From a practical view-point too, even taking for granted the pessimistic view of the irreconcilable differences between Muslim and Hindu cultures, there can be no other means of a better future for India. No amount of wishful thinking will perform the miracle of the total disappearance of millions of Muslims or Hindus from our landscape. For better or for worse "till death do us part" that is our destiny. The determination to solve it has to be found and once it is found, it will restore the chapter of friendliness, cordiality and even affection between the two communities which unfortunately has been closed in recent years.'

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND SPIRITUAL RENAISSANCE. BY SWAMI NIRVEDANANDA. *Published by The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 19, Keshab Chandra Sen Street, Calcutta. Pp. 315. Price Rs. 2/-.*

India, for thousands of years, has been a fountain-spring of spirituality. She has passed through successive phases of ebb and flow in her spiritual life, and every religious upheaval has brought about a corresponding cultural renaissance. The coming of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda marked the dawn of a new era of universal spiritual awakening, and in the wake of this the present century is witnessing a wonderful revival of arts, letters, science, phi-

losophy and every branch of thought and activity of Indian life. In a long and excellent article written for the *Cultural Heritage of India* published in commemoration of the first Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Nirvedananda gives a concise but comprehensive résumé of the lives and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, clearly pointing out the importance and necessity of their universal message to India and the world. This article has been brought out in the form of the present book, with necessary alterations and additions by the author, for the convenience of a larger public who may be unable to get access to the original Centenary volume.

It is divided into four main sections. The first section is an introductory review of the mighty movements of socio-religious reform, such as the Arya Samaj, the Brahmo Samaj and the Theosophical Society, which came to be founded during the nineteenth century with the purpose of resuscitating the ancient culture of India. The next section is devoted entirely to Sri Ramakrishna, being a survey of the incidents in his illustrious life, the different Sadhanas he practised and the realizations he attained, and the remarkable way he trained the few young disciples who were charged with the task of spreading his lofty message. In the following section we have a short biographical sketch of Swami Vivekananda which vividly impresses on our minds the deep significance of the Swami's great mission in the West and his glorious message of hope and strength to awakening India. The ideas and ideals presented by the Master's life and teachings took concrete shape in a permanent monastic organization, the Ramakrishna Order of monks, which in co-operation with its sister organization, the Ramakrishna Mission, is steadily carrying on missionary and philanthropic activities with an absolutely new spiritual outlook suited to the requirements of the age. Some information about the objects and methods of work of these institutions is given in the concluding section of the book, which also briefly reviews the course of contemporary events in the light of what Swami Vivekananda prophetically declared four decades ago.

To-day the name of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa is known all over India by its millions of people and his power has spread

to distant parts of the world. By discipline of the body and subduing of the mind he had obtained a wonderful insight into the spiritual world. Comparative study of religions has clearly pointed out that there is an underlying harmony among the different religions of mankind. Sri Ramakrishna lived and taught this harmony of religions in a way unique in the history of the world. He was the embodiment of knowledge, love, renunciation, catholicity and the desire to serve man. He has given to this new age its new religion—the synthesis of Yoga, Bhakti, Jnana and Karma. It was Swami Vivekananda who roused that cultural self-consciousness among the Indians by which they could get rid of the hypnotic spell of a foreign civilization and feel justly proud of the momentous secular and spiritual achievements of their forefathers. Scientific inventions, conquest of countries and possession of wealth have not given to man that peace of mind and contentment of heart which he most needs. For this no better proof is necessary than what is happening in Europe to-day. But when the conflagration subsides and men and women settle down to a new order of life, the life-giving message of Sri Ramakrishna will find wide acceptance among the peoples of the West. His wonderfully inspiring life and highly rational teachings have exerted a great influence on modern India, and all sections of society are beginning to appreciate the new attitude in thought and action as lived and taught by Sri Ramakrishna. We heartily recommend the book under review to every English-knowing person.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MADRAS

The Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Mylapore, Madras, has completed the thirty-sixth year of its useful career. Its various activities for the year 1940 may be placed under the following heads:

Home proper : The strength of the Home at the end of the year was 191 of whom 119 were in the Residential High School, 45 in the Industrial School, 23 in the Arts Colleges, 1 in the School of Indian Medicine and 8 in the Medical College. Of the 4 students who appeared for the various University

Examinations 3 came out successful. About half the number of students were in receipt of scholarships from various sources. The Seva Praveena Samiti consisting of 15 experienced students elected by the general body, looked after all the domestic affairs of the Home and also helped in the social service and night school work carried on by the Ramakrishna Thondar Sangham. The junior students had classes in drill and group games while the senior students were practising Asanam exercises. Every boy

had to participate in one of the organized games, and an hour was devoted daily by the High School boys for garden work. Music classes were held for selected boys and group-singing and Bhajans were organized for all. The Bhagavad-Gita together with the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda formed the main text for religious instruction. The shrine offered the ground for individual and congregational prayers. The observance of various Hindu religious festivals including the birthdays of great religious leaders of the world were occasions for the students to cultivate their religious feelings. The total number of books in the different sectional libraries came to 13,437 at the end of the year. Many leading dailies and journals were received in the Reading Room.

The Residential High School: A compulsory course of Sanskrit up to IV Form and manual training up to VI Form form the special features of the School. The languages taught are English, Tamil, Sanskrit and Hindusthani. The S. S. L. C. curriculum is followed in general. The regular crafts that are taught are weaving, wood-work and cane-work. The miscellaneous department provides facilities for photography, book binding, printing, tailoring, bee-keeping, varnishing, painting, paper-making and soap-making. Each student has to work for two years in one of these departments. Out of the 17 students who sat for the S. S. L. C. Examination 15 were declared eligible. The Volunteer Corps organized by the students maintained order and discipline in the School. There is a Literary Union which held regular meetings for the practice of elocution and debate and published manu-

script magazines. The boys were taken on excursion to places of educational interest.

Industrial School: Automobile Engineering is the objective of the School and it prepares students for the L. A. E. Diploma issued by the Government. The Jubilee Workshop is fully equipped with precision tools and appliances. 5 students out of 9 passed in the Public Examination held in 1940.

High School at Tyagarayanagar: The High School was shifted to its permanent building during the year. The total strength of the School was 2,077 distributed as follows: Main School, 1,330; North Branch, 425; South Branch, 322. The Girls' Section which formed part of the Boys' High School was separated during the year and incorporated with the local Ramakrishna Mission Sarada Vidyalaya. There was also a Boys' Elementary School with a strength of 260 at the end of the year. Out of 252 pupils that were sent up for the S. S. L. C. Examination, 129 were declared eligible.

Due emphasis was laid on religious instruction and physical culture and various games were provided for. The library contained over 7,500 volumes. The students went out on excursions to various places of interest. 11 students were awarded certificates in the last Madura Tamil Sangham Examinations. The School granted concessions to 332 students and arranged for scholarships for many others. There is a hostel attached to the School which accommodated 50 students during the year under review. Any contribution made to the institution will be thankfully received and acknowledged.

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

‘Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.’

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

SREEYUT BANKIM MEETS SRI RAMAKRISHNA

Sunday, 6th December, 1884.

Sri Ramakrishna has come to the house of Sreeyut Adharlal Sen. Adhar is a Deputy Magistrate and about twenty-nine or thirty years old. He is a great devotee. The Master loves him very much.

How wonderful is the devotion of Adhar ! After the day's hard work in the office he returns home, washes his hand and mouth in a hurry, and forthwith starts for Dakshineswar to see Sri Ramakrishna. Rarely he fails to be there in the evening. He lives at Shobhabazaar. From there he hires a carriage to the temple at Dakshineswar for which he has to pay two rupees a day. His only joy is that he is able to see Sri Ramakrishna at least once in a day. But it is only on rare occasions that he can listen to him. As soon as he reaches he prostrates himself before the Master and then inquires about his health, after which he goes to see the Divine Mother

in the temple. He returns from there and takes rest on the mat spread over the floor of Sri Ramakrishna's room. The Master himself asks him to take some rest. Within a short time he falls asleep due to extreme exhaustion of his body. At about nine or ten at night he is awakened. He gets up, bows down to the Master and returns home by the same carriage.

Often Adhar invites Sri Ramakrishna to his house at Shobhabazaar. The presence of the Master invariably gives rise to rejoicing. Adhar feels extremely happy in the company of the Master and his devotees and feeds them to their satisfaction with various dainties.

One day when Sri Ramakrishna went to his house, Adhar said, ‘You did not come to my house for a long time and how gloomy it looked ! Some vile smell was, as it were, issuing out of it ! But see to-day, how bright it looks and what

a fragrance pervades it! I prayed to the Lord with all my heart to-day, and tears were rolling down my cheek.' The Master replied with wonder, 'What do you say!' and began to look at him affectionately and smile.

To-day also is an occasion for great rejoicing in the house of Adhar. The Master is full of joy and so also are the devotees. The Master will allow no other topic but that of God to be raised, and so all are happy. The devotees are present and there are also many newcomers. Adhar is a Deputy Magistrate and has invited some of his official friends. They will see Sri Ramakrishna personally and judge whether he is really a great soul.

The Master is talking with the devotees. A gentle smile plays upon his face. Adhar comes with some of his friends and sits near the Master.

Adhar (to Sri Ramakrishna, pointing to Bankim): 'Sir, he is a great scholar and an author of many books. He has come to see you. His name is Bankim.'

Sri Ramakrishna (with a smile): 'You are Bankim!' Well, in contemplation of whom has your body turned crooked?'¹

Bankim (smiling): 'Yes, sir, it is the kick of the Sahib's boot that has made me so!' (All laugh).

Sri Ramakrishna: 'Not so; the three bends that marked the person of Sri Krishna were due to His consuming love for Srimati. This is the explanation that some people give. Do you know why he looks dark and short, measuring only three cubits and a half? God appears to be dark so long as He is away from us. The sea looks blue from a distance. But go near it, take a little water up in your hands and it is no longer blue but clear as crystal. The sun appears small because it is so remote from us. Looked at from close

quarters it is huge in size. If God is known in His true self, He is neither dark nor short. But such realization is a remote possibility and cannot be attained except in the state of Samadhi. Name and form exist so long as the sense of duality lasts. It is all His play. He manifests Himself in diverse forms till the dual consciousness of "you" and "I" holds sway over us.

'Sri Krishna is the Purusha (the Male Principle) and Srimati is His Shakti... the Primal Divine Energy. They are also called Purusha and Prakriti (the Female Principle). What is the significance of the Yugala Murti?' It shows that Purusha and Prakriti are inseparable. There can be no separation between them. Purusha cannot exist without Prakriti, nor can Prakriti have any being apart from Purusha. The one implies the existence of the other. Take for instance the fire and its power to burn. Fire cannot be thought of apart from its burning power, nor can its burning power be thought of in isolation from fire. Therefore, in the Yugala Murti the eyes of Sri Krishna are fixed on Srimati and those of Srimati on Sri Krishna. The fair complexion of Srimati resembles the lightning, and so Sri Krishna puts on a yellow garb. Sri Krishna appears like a dark blue cloud in complexion, and so the cloth that Srimati wears is dyed in that colour, and she adorns her body with sapphires. Srimati puts on anklets, and Sri Krishna also does the same. All these point to the fact that there is perfect resemblance between Purusha and Prakriti, both internally and externally.'

The Master stops, and the friends of Adhar including Bankim and others begin to talk slowly amongst themselves in English.

¹ The images of Sri Krishna and Srimati presented as a couple.

¹ Literally one with a crooked body.

Sri Ramakrishna (with a smile, to Bankim and others): 'Well, what are you talking about in English?' (All laugh).

Adhar: 'Yes, revered sir, they are talking about the interpretation you have given of the image of Sri Krishna.'

Sri Ramakrishna (with a smile, to all): 'I am reminded of a story and cannot help laughing. Let me narrate it to you. A barber once went out to shave people. Now, while shaving a gentleman he inadvertently inflicted a slight injury on him at which the gentleman shouted out, "Damn." The barber did not know the meaning of the word "Damn." He was upset and throwing the razor and other implements on the ground, and with his sleeves drawn up, he challenged the gentleman to divulge the meaning of the term. The gentleman said, "Well, my good fellow, don't be disturbed, go on with your shaving, it does not mean anything serious; but shave me a little carefully." But the barber wouldn't let go the thing so easily. He said, "If the word does not mean anything wrong then I am so, my father is so and all my forefathers are so. But if it is otherwise, then you are damned, your father is damned and all your fourteen generations are so. (All laugh). And not only once but a hundred times so."' (All laugh loudly).

The laughter subsides and Bankim starts the talk again.

Bankim: 'Well, sir, why don't you preach?'

Sri Ramakrishna (with a smile): 'You talk of preaching! These are words of conceit. Man is an insignificant being. The Lord who has created the sun and the moon and has manifested this universe will take upon Himself the task of preaching too. Is it an easy thing to preach? Preaching

in its true sense is not possible unless one has attained the vision of God and received the commandment from Him. Of course, who can prevent one from preaching? You may go on talking glibly even without any commission from God. People will listen to you for a while and then forget everything. It may stir up a temporary sensation but nothing more! So long as you talk, people will applaud you saying, "Oh, how beautifully he speaks!" But as soon as you stop there will be no trace left behind of anything!

The milk in the pan puffs up so long as there is fire under it. But the puffing ceases as soon as you remove the fire from under the pan.

Moreover, one should accumulate power through spiritual practices. No preaching can be done effectively without it. The man who acts otherwise becomes ridiculous like one who, having nowhere to lay his own head on, proposes to offer shelter to others.

'In that part of the country there is a tank called Haldar-pukur. Every day some people used to throw dirt round its sides. Others called the offenders names, but there was no end to the practice. At last the matter was reported to the Government. They put up a notice there with the words "Commit no nuisance here; offenders will be prosecuted." See the wonder of it, the nuisance stopped altogether and there was no trouble afterwards. It was an order from the Government and all must abide by it.

'Similarly, if God appears before you and commissions you to preach, only then you can do so. Your teaching, then, will be a real source of enlightenment to the people. Otherwise, who will listen to you?'

With rapt attention all listen to the Master.

THE SEED WORD

BY SWAMI TURIYANANDA

As the future growth and development of a tree, the manifestation of its fruits and flowers lie dormant in the seed, in the same way the word which helps to arouse in the aspirant the power of spiritual development leading to his attainment of the supreme good is the seed mystic word. A great man has sung :—

‘O my mind, knowest thou not the work of cultivation;

This precious human soil which would have yielded gold to cultivation remains fallow.

Plant the seed given by the Guru and water it with the water of devotion;

And if thou, O my mind, canst do it alone, why not take Ramprasad with thee?

Hedge it round with the name of Kali, the crop will not be stolen;

It is the strong fence of Kali with loose hair, which the King of Death dare not approach.’

The human soil, the seed given by the Guru, the planting of the seed, wetting it with the water of devotion, hedging it round with the name of Kali,—dedication of even the self by spiritual exercises of this nature—these are the hints. The Master used to say, ‘Why not take Ramprasad with you,’ means forgetting the self even—the notion that ‘I am Ramprasad or so and so.’ The finale of spiritual endeavour is to get completely merged in Him. The different gods and goddesses are only the manifested forms of the different powers of that Indivisible Existence-Intelligence-Bliss, bearing different names and manifesting them-

selves in various forms to fulfil the longings of the devotees. So why should not the seed words be different? You will find detailed account of it in the Tantras.

The entire Hindu religious system rests upon the Vedas alone; so no dogma or faith, that is to say, no Purana or Tantra, is non-Vedic. Each of these is founded on the Vedas. Only the seers have explained them differently and have formulated different kinds of spiritual discipline so that the aspirants may the more easily understand them. The writers of the Shastras claim that the topics they deal with are to be found in the Vedas themselves. We shall no doubt do an injustice if without having read all the Vedas we say that these are not in them. When all words are derived from the Omkara, what doubt can there be then that all the seed words are born of Omkara? I have heard that the Anāhata sound (sound which is said to be perceived in very deep meditation and which is not due to any outside causes such as an object striking another) can be heard; the seed word too is seen in luminous characters and is also sometimes heard. I don’t know if the seed word gets merged in Omkara. But I have heard that the mystic formula and the deity are non-different. The mystic formula is, as it were, the support of the deity’s body. There can be no final solution of these matters by mere questioning. It demands spiritual discipline and comes in the course of time by the grace of the Guru. As the Master used to say: ‘One does not get intoxicated by merely shouting “Hemp-

hemp !” The hemp has to be fetched, washed, pounded and then drunk before one gets inebriated.’ Then make merry shouting victory to Kali. The Shastras say that it is not good to be given to argumentation. Of course, a few questions can be asked for the sake of understanding ; but all questions cease as one proceeds with spiritual exercises. It is impossible that questions will stop without spiritual exercises.

As queries arise from within, so all doubts also vanish within when the

truth is realized through spiritual practices. This is said to be the attainment of peace or rest. He alone feels who gains it through the grace of God. Otherwise none can ever attain that state by asking questions—this is the conclusion of the Shastras. ‘This Atman cannot be gained by much study’—this and hundred other statements from the Shastras are the proof. Be up and doing ; the grace of God is sure to descend. Then you will enjoy bliss alone.

THE HOME OF ALL BLISS*

O Lord, what else in life is sweet,
 If like a bee I cannot sip
 The honey of Thy lotus-feet?
 Of what avail is wealth untold,
 If having this one still forgets
 That greater treasure Thou dost hold?

I cannot bear an infant’s glance,
 If in his tender face I find
 No likeness to Thy countenance.
 Fie on this moon ! It were but night,
 If those clear beams could not reveal
 The glory of Thy clearer light !
 Even chaste love appears dull ore,
 If in that purest gold is set
 No diamond from Thy priceless store !

O Lord, whenever through mistake
 I doubt Thee, in my soul I feel
 The venom of some deadly snake !
 What shall I tell Thee, more than this?
 Thou art my heart’s most precious jewel,
 Thou art the home of all my bliss !

PROBLEMS OF HARMONY

To define is to settle the exact limits. The Infinite is boundless, endless. Defining the Infinite is, therefore, a contradiction in terms. God transcends space and time; He is also immanent in space and time. In Him contraries meet and stand synthesized into a grand harmony. He is greater than the greatest and at the same time smaller than the smallest. Storm and thunder, violent earthquakes and terrific cataclysms reveal one aspect of God; the gentle zephyr that blows over a flowery meadow reveals another aspect. He is the One, yet He is the Many. He is the Seed Immutable, the cause of the unfolding of all the worlds; He is also the mighty world-destroying Time, which becomes manifested for the purpose of infolding the worlds. He is the Life of all life and He is also Death, the great destroyer. The scriptures declare that He is the Ancient One, the Teacher of all teachers; yet we know that the newest philosophy has its source in Him. Residing in the hearts of all beings, He is nearer than the nearest; yet standing apart in His own glory, He is farther than the farthest. His voice is heard in the silence and solitude of the desert; He is also present in the turmoil and rush of life. Renunciation and life-struggle are but the reverse and obverse of the same coin. 'I am immortality and also death; being and non-being am I, O Arjuna,' says the Lord. We address our prayers and call on Him to lead us from non-being to being, from darkness to light, and from death to immortality.

He is both non-being and being, darkness and light, death and immortality. Why then should we prefer one to the

other? The reason for this, probably lies in the fact that non-being, darkness and death are already with us and we yearn for the opposites so that we may realize the fullness which is God. Once we realize the fullness, we may 'hug the form of Death and dance in Destruction's dance.'

Who dares misery love,
And hug the form of Death,
Dance in Destruction's dance,
To him the Mother comes.

—Swami Vivekananda

'Be thou free, O Arjuna, from the triad of the Gunas, free from the pairs of opposites, ever-balanced, free from (the thought of) getting and keeping, and established in the Self,' says the Lord. Freedom lies in rising above the pairs of opposites, and in attaining the balanced state of mind that is not affected by heat and cold, joy and grief, action and inaction, attachment and aversion. This appears to be the central teaching of all forms of Yoga. What are the characteristics of the free man? 'Content with what comes to him without effort, unaffected by the pairs of opposites, free from envy, even-minded in success and failure, though acting, he is not bound.' Freedom is the goal of life and the attainment of freedom demands a moral and intellectual discipline that would help the individual to harmonize differences. Nature seeks harmony. Water, we say, finds its own level. The river that rises in the lofty mountain peak flows through smiling valleys and rice-fields and ultimately reaches the sea. The mountain and the sea stand harmonized by the river. The breeze that blows humming

over the tree-tops harmonizes a high-pressure region in the atmosphere with a low-pressure region. Charity that flows from the rich to the poor is a blessing to both, the giver and the recipient. The rich and the poor, the aristocrat and the base-born, the learned and the illiterate, youth and old age, all have their place in the scheme of things. Each needs the other and finds its fullness in what appears to be diametrically opposed to itself. We hear a great deal nowadays about the equality of the sexes. If we think a little deeply we shall find that man and woman are not equal, nor are they unequal. Each is the complement of the other and that is why man finds his fulfilment in woman and woman finds hers in man. Night finds its fulfilment in day and day in night. Sunshine and gloom, winter and summer are complementary; each finds its fulfilment in the other.

Mystics and philosophers have attempted to express the inexpressible by saying 'not this, not this.' Even the term 'infinite' is a negative term, it negates finiteness. 'Eternal' negates finite duration of time. Our mind is capable of conceiving a limited extent of space and a limited extent of time. It is like the frog in the old story, the frog whose whole range of locomotion was limited by the confines of an old well. The mystic is the more fortunate frog that had hopped to the sea-side and back perchance a few times. As a result of its peregrinations, it had caught some glimpses of the sea. If it had chosen to make the sea its permanent home, it may not have returned to tell its tale. The very fact that it returned to its friend in the well shows that it knows the limitations of the well and has also a vision of the limitless sea. The only way in which the mystic frog can convey its new im-

pression to its non-mystic friend may be by negating the limited. The limitless may be conceived as a negation of the limited. Can it not also be conceived as including the limited and yet surpassing it? Is it not possible to see that every drop of water in the old well has at some time or other formed part of the limitless sea? If the mystic frog were to grow a little more philosophical, will it not include the part in the whole and communicate a fuller view to its friend by making an affirmation and a negation or by making two affirmations? Its answer might have been 'this and yet not this' or 'this and much more than this.' In the course of evolution the human mind has learnt to perceive things by setting up limits and perceiving differences. The term signifying mind in some languages is etymologically connected with the root denoting measure. To know is to measure. Human logic lays emphasis on the differences of contraries, and human history is the record of battles fought for the maintenance of tribal, racial and national frontiers. The hunter assigns to himself a tract of forest and does not suffer another man's trespassing into it. The walls of a rich man's pleasure-garden are also the walls of his prison. He not only shuts out the world but also shuts himself out of the world. This is 'mine' and this is 'not mine,' are the first conceptions which arise in the undeveloped mind in its attempt to grasp the facts around it. Finite facts can be grasped easily by noticing their peculiarities, their differences. The foot-rule, the pound-weight and the stop-watch are excellent instruments for comparing two limited quantities. But can they be used to measure the infinite and the eternal? Likewise, can the logic of finite facts be used as a measure of the infinite glories of God? If contraries meet in Him, it is evident that the

mode of apprehending Him is to be sought for elsewhere.

The circle has often been used as a symbol of perfection, for the vertical and the horizontal, the right end and the left end, the top and the bottom and all the points of the compass stand harmonized in it. In this planet of ours the North Pole and the South Pole are farthest apart, they are literally poles asunder. Yet they combine into the axis around which the earth spins. The fact that contraries are not mutually opposed, but can be combined together to make a whole infinitely richer than the two seemingly opposed elements has been perceived more by the artist than by the man of science. The scientist with his measuring rod attempts to comprehend the unity amidst diversity. He reduces quality to a mere function of quantity. With his delicate instruments he can minutely measure wave-lengths and frequencies of vibration. He examines the seven colours of the spectrum; to his eyes they represent differing wave-lengths, differing frequencies of vibration of the same light energy. Music to the mathematician has only a quantitative appeal. The varying notes of music are to him differing frequencies of vibration based upon differing wave-lengths. The harmony of two notes is to him a mere arithmetical ratio. Science progresses by closer and closer analysis. Light is conceived as an electromagnetic disturbance. In an advanced stage, the scientist discovers that light energy, electrical energy, magnetic energy, heat energy and mechanical energy are all different forms of the same energy. Even the distinction between matter and energy ceases to be, when matter is conceived as built up of electrons and protons, centres of energy or waves in the ether, whatever the scientist might choose to call them. The scientist having arrived at the last

possible stage of analysis proclaims that he has explained the riddle of the universe. Now let us consider for a moment the working of the artist's mind. He sees light and shade and notices their distinctive characteristics. To him shade is not a mere negation of light. The difference between them is not merely quantitative. He knows that each standing by itself means very little, but he recognizes the possibility of bringing them together to produce a whole of far greater value than the parts. He harmonizes light and shade and produces a picture that delights our eye. Each part has not lost its individuality, its inherent value. At the same time each part has contributed to the making of a whole of far greater value. The artist again knows the value of each tint, its qualitative difference from other tints. The patches of colours he places upon the canvas at various positions in varying degrees of intensity combine together to make a beautiful picture, a masterpiece, an immortal work of art. The individual tint, while conserving all its inherent value, contributes its quota to the making of a whole of infinitely greater value. The musician knows the worth of each individual musical note. By combining them he produces a symphony of inestimable value. His rhythms interweave sounds with intervals of silence. The poet has the whole gamut of human emotions to work upon. He builds out of them immortal dramas, epics, and lyrics. In the productions of the artists we notice how greater values can be created by harmonizing lesser values. We also notice how the fleeting can be made into the permanent, how mortality can be raised to immortality. With the insight of the artist, shall we not pray to God, the Master-Artist to lead us from being

and non-being to the Truth that harmonizes being with non-being, from darkness and light, to the Beauty that harmonizes darkness and light, from death and immortality to the Perfection that harmonizes death and immortality?

It is true that we have to rise from non-being to being to appreciate and evaluate the harmony of non-being and being. Likewise we have to rise from darkness to light to understand the harmony of darkness and light and we should also rise from death to immortality to live in that state of perfection that harmonizes death and immortality. The principle of harmony supplies us with a new organon, a new tool of thought to understand the workings of the infinite mind of God and the order prevailing in His universe. Art appears to open up new vistas of thought, new portals of understanding. The apparent dualism of Creator and creature may not be resolved into the barren monism of denying the one or the other. Non-dualism harmonizes the Creator and creature into a whole of infinitely greater value. Brahman, the Absolute has no parts. The Creator is Brahman, the creature is also Brahman. The Spirit is Brahman, matter is also Brahman. The sentient, the conscious is Brahman; the insentient, the unconscious is also Brahman. The static, the unchanging is Brahman; the dynamic, the ever-changing is also Brahman. Being is Brahman, becoming is also Brahman. In the light of the Shruti, meditation such as this forms the path of the aspirant and also the goal that he has to reach. In highly symbolical language, the Vedic seers have revealed to us the results of their meditations. Their teachings are diffi-

cult of comprehension, except to scholars who are prepared to spend a lifetime studying the commentaries. The average student yearns for something simpler, something easier of comprehension and applicable to life and its ordinary problems. This need has been fulfilled by the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, the great prophet of harmony. Every little act of his and all his teachings illustrate the principle of harmony. He harmonized the life of a true Sannyasin with the life of a true householder, a most wonderful achievement in itself. The ordinary aspirant on the path enters into these two stages successively. Having completed the duties of the householder, he embraces Sannyasa. Here is a person who successfully practised the two ideals simultaneously. Ever dwelling in the silent bliss of Samadhi he combined with it the active ministry of communicating to eager listeners the fruits of his profound meditations. Himself a scion of the highest caste, he took upon himself to clean the lavatory of a low-born man. He, the best of teachers always spoke of himself as a learner and conducted himself accordingly. The sacred and secular were not kept by him in two watertight compartments. The sacred became the secular when he fed the image of the Divine Mother with his own hands and placed on the head of the holy image flowers with which he had previously touched various parts of his own body. The secular became the sacred, when he offered worship at the feet of his own wife. He had the simplicity of a child but learned pandits and profound scholars sought his advice. He exhibited his contempt for possessions when he refused a large sum of money offered to him by a merchant, but at the same time we find him insisting upon getting his

proper share of the food-offerings made to the Deity. The rich as well as the poor saw in him a true comrade who could sympathize with them and understand their true difficulties. The sages, mentioned in the old religious legends, were as a rule misogynists, but here is a man whom women regarded as one of themselves. We stand in amazement and ask ourselves the question: Is this person man or God? Men had different opinions regarding him. Various religionists saw in him their own ideals; scholars versed in Vedanta philosophy saw in him the Brahma-Jnani in whom God and man stand harmonized. He himself declared to his beloved disciple that Rama and Krishna have become Ramakrishna, also adding 'not in your Vedantic sense.'

Turning to his teachings we find a wonderful catholicity and universality of outlook. Spiritual truths and practices which were considered as different and incompatible stand harmonized by the realizations of this supreme artist of the religious life. The worship of the One, the Absolute, is shown to be quite compatible with the worship of the Many, the various divine manifestations. The impersonal and the personal, the Nirguna and the Saguna, the Nirākāra and the Sākāra are shown as complementaries. The worship of God as pure Spirit is shown to be quite compatible with the worship of man by kind and loving service. The emotional life of Bhakti, the path of devotion is harmonized with the intellectual life of Jnana, the path of knowledge. He speaks of God as Father and also as Mother. Dvaita, dualism, Vishishtadvaita, qualified non-dualism, and Advaita, non-dualism, are held by him not as distinct warring

creeds but as parts of one undivided whole. Shaivism, Vaishnavism and Shaktism coalesce into one religion by his religious experience which also lends new light to Islam and Christianity. He and his disciples after him insist on preserving the individuality of each creed. Let a Christian be a better Christian and a Muslim a better Muslim, seems to be the burden of their teachings. The necessity of maintaining careful accounts and marketing intelligently is considered to be as much a religious duty as retiring into solitude and practising a life of contemplation. The gospel of Sri Ramakrishna, thus lays down the principles for the realization of a whole and complete life. It is no wonder that the active West and the contemplative East are equally attracted by this life and these teachings.

Let us now turn our attention to the application of the principle of harmony to other pursuits in life. 'The education of the whole man' is one of the important topics that at present engages the attention of prominent educationists in the West. Some of their writings exhibit a poverty of conception. Attention is centred round the mind and body of man; the soul figures as a sort of a moral director, as the active agent behind that aspect of mind known as conation. The Over-soul that pervades all individual souls has no place at all. In spite of these deficiencies the thoughts propounded and the forms of discipline recommended are original and if accepted cannot but have very far-reaching effects. The educator of the present day pays attention only to the mind and that too to the cognitive aspect of it; the affective and conative aspects are treated as subsidiary. The train-

ing of the body is left to the physical instructor, who is often the drill-sergeant, the soul is cared for by the parson or priest and is often left uncared for. *Mens sana in corpore sano* 'a sound mind in a sound body' is often exhibited in the walls of gymnasiums and school-halls, but no one ever questions why splendid specimens of manhood which often figure with success in playing-fields are usually found associated with extremely moderate brain powers. The existing system of education both in the West and in the East—where teachers are proud to follow second-hand ideals imported from the West—is at its best a mere patchwork. At its worst, it is a regular anarchy in which soul, mind and body instead of working harmoniously rebel against one another. To conceive the training of man as an organic whole and to bring in order where there is chaos are in themselves very difficult tasks, which require very sound thought and application. We made our humble contribution to this pressing national and international problem in a previous issue of this journal (March, 1940), under the caption 'The Application of the Vedantic Ideal to Educational Problems.' We discussed there the ancient Greek ideals of education which aimed at the harmonious development of mind and body and the Ancient Hindu ideal of Yoga which gave the foremost place to the development of the spiritual side of man. We also dwelt a little on the possibility of harmonizing the Greek and the Hindu ideals. The subject is, of course, very vast and we could not do justice to it within the limited space that was available. The technique recommended by the promoters of the new ideal in education demands also a new class of teachers. The post-war world may give more thought to this matter

and formulate the principles for the education of the whole man. Among the products of the present system we often see fractional men who snarl at each other like street-dogs and restlessly run about like monkeys. The new education should develop sober men who would harmoniously co-operate for the progress of the world as a whole and who would remind us of the following noble words of the greatest of English poets: 'What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god!'

Self-assertion with its emphasis upon rights and privileges and self-denial with equal emphasis on duties and obligations are two of the cardinal principles of life. The excess of either will lead to ruin. To establish a harmony between faith, duty, obedience and obligation on the one side and reason, liberty, privilege and personal conviction on the other requires constant alertness guided by a cultivated and well-balanced mind. The egoistic and altruistic impulses are both too precious to be suppressed or killed. The problem is to harmonize them. The men who have developed their intellect at the cost of their moral nature develop Asuric tendencies and become a real menace to society and to the world. Those that have developed the emotional side which lack the guidance of a robust intellect and strong will fall an easy prey to the aggressor in the political, economic and other spheres of life. Again, when differing cultures and thought-currents assail a nation, as is the case in contemporary India, the necessity arises for working them out into a harmo-

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND YOUNG INDIA

BY SIR SARVAPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN

[The present article is from the shorthand reports of the speech delivered by Sir S. Radhakrishnan, presiding over a public meeting in Calcutta in connection with the seventy-eighth birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.—Ed.]

I wish to make a special appeal to-day to the message of Swami Vivekananda so far as young India is concerned. I wish to pay my tribute to his great spiritual services and to what he stood for, so that modern India and young India may understand him and his message.

I was a student in the early years of this century, a student in high school and college classes. Then we used to read Swami Vivekananda's speeches and letters which were then passing from hand to hand in manuscript form, and they used to stir us a great deal and make us feel proud of our ancient culture that though our externals were broken down the spirit of our country is there and is everlastingly real. That was the message which we gathered from his speeches and writings when I was a young student. My life has been cast with young students since then.

In the second decade of this century our students took to the writings of Rabindranath Tagore. He got the Nobel Prize in that decade and we used to read with avidity and enthusiasm the writings of Rabindranath Tagore.

In the third decade we passed on and we looked to the writings of Mahatma Gandhi, to his *Young India* and the stirring message to our sense of patriotism couched in his writings and in his life.

To-day in the fourth decade my young friends are poring over Marx and Lenin,

and they are the writings most popular so far as young men are concerned.

You see, in the first three decades Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi, all these were rooted in what you call the spiritual soil of this great land; and our great political leaders, Aurobindo Ghosh and Bala Gangadhar Tilak were people who had a firm faith in the greatness of Indian culture and at the same time were great patriots and great reformers. That is what they were. But to-day we can see a growing tendency among our young men and women to think that all those things are out of date, that they have betrayed us and that we should turn to copying another kind of civilization. We may possess Indian bodies but we must borrow other souls to inhabit them. That seems to be the growing tendency to-day. I should like to ask you whether you are so much satisfied with the high-pressure machine civilization that has led us to this appalling tragedy in which three continents are involved and other continents are likely to be engulfed. I am asking you to consider whether a civilization such as ours to-day has not outreached itself; whether a civilization like this where man is able to ride the air and swim the seas but has to cover his face and hide underground, a civilization where young people from the beginning, from their nurseries and kindergarten, are taught to develop a

spirit of hatred, whether a civilization where women cry out from the depth of their hearts, 'Blessed is the womb that is bare and blessed the breast which never gave a suck,' whether a civilization that has landed us in this kind of crisis and catastrophe can be regarded as fundamentally sound and worth copying by us. That is the question which I wish to put to you. I want you to ask yourselves whether this civilization that has brought the world to the present position is fundamentally sound, propping itself on foundations which can be regarded as just and righteous. Whenever you talk of civilization it is no use your talking of economic arrangements, political forms, scientific technique and equipment. Civilization is a movement of the spirit. And you ask what is the spiritual essence, what is the nerve principle, that vital spark which has made all this civilization thrive.

It was represented to us that modern civilization, of which Britain is the greatest representative, can be symbolized by the ballot-box, the cricket bat, the authorized version of the Holy Bible and the limited liability company. These are the four principles. We have our political democracy, we have the appearances of great sportsmanship, we have also the appearances of being truly religious people. But it is a civilization which centres round banks, factories, corporations, companies and enterprises of individual men who want to make themselves wealthy and luxurious at the expense and degradation of many people. That is what civilization actually stands for. We talk about religion. Can you show one single instance where religious and national aspirations were in clash, and where national aspirations were surrendered to religious aspirations? Can you show me one single instance where you put religion as the first thing in

the first place, and politics, economics, etc. in the second place? Well, I tell you that civilization, though it may be seemingly religious, though it may have the authorized version of the Holy Bible as one of its pillars, is essentially a secular one, is essentially a materialistic one. So if this is civilization, if it is secular and its outlook ultimately materialistic, where man finds himself dressed with brief little authority, plays all these tricks which have brought us to this condition, you must ask whether it is not necessary to bring about a different kind of civilization which does not rest on mere secularism, which dethrones materialism and where profit motive gives place to what you consider service of fellow men.

Is it not time for you to get back to a civilization where the principles are more just and sound than the civilization which we are so eager to copy in our anxiety to make ourselves popular and important?

The question is 'What is man?' Is he a crawling earthworm? Or, is he the most cunning of all animals, or is he an economic being controlled by the laws of supply and demand, or is he, as Swami Vivekananda said, an 'Atman,' a universal spirit? However dense, however obstinate, however depraved a human being may be, there is that essential divine spark in him that can never be surrendered. Are there not moments in each one of your lives which redeem you from the actual commonplace existence, moments when you feel you do not walk on solid earth but float in thin air, moments when life seems as still as death, moments when you are in communion with fundamental spiritual reality, when indeed life and death seem merely but two shadows? Is it not a fact that each one of us is able at some time or other of his life to feel the triteness, the unworthy pettiness of the

pleasures of life and possessions of the earth, and feel there are certain eternal values which are permanent, which cannot be superseded by the passing insanities of this world? If Swami Vivekananda stood out for such a kind of doctrine, if he has made an appeal to us to realize that a human being is not to be regarded as an earthworm, or an economic being, or a political creature, but that he has an inner citadel, a sanctuary of his soul which cannot be penetrated by anything external, and that inner sanctuary of his will have to be preserved against attacks of economics and politics, is he not standing up for spiritual equality for the whole of humanity? That is the gospel for which Swami Vivekananda has stood up that has saved India until the present moment, and that is the gospel to which we have been disloyal. If we are where we are, it is not because we have clung to our ideals, but it is because we have not been sufficiently loyal to the great ideals which have come down to us.

One speaker spoke of the way in which for him and for the whole of the Indian people God takes shape in ordinary human beings. There is nothing higher than humanity. But so far as we are concerned, a human individual is a lamp of spirit on earth, the most concrete living embodiment of spirit. We do not know the transcendental spirit. If you want to know, however, the spirit incarnated, you have to meet a brother man, a man who requires most assistance from you, not the man who is hale and healthy, but one who is poor, who is afflicted and who is in distressed circumstances. This is the appeal of every great saint so far as human service is concerned. That is the appeal

which you have to stand for. There are people who say we are contemplative and that we are not sufficiently practical. But that must be regarded as something which is not corroborated by any of our great writings or lives of great personalities. You cannot think of more dynamic personalities in this country than those religious geniuses who have stirred us to incarnate the high ideals of spirit. Buddha, Shankara and the Gitaacharya, all these are people who not only dwelt on mountain heights but returned to the service of ordinary men, came back to the plane of history. If moments of contemplation are necessary to make us firm in this attitude, moments of action are equally necessary to put those ideals to practical service. By standing up for the great ideals of Hindu religion, the great ideals which alone can save humanity, by standing up for them, Swami Vivekananda tried to lead humanity to a nobler and better path than that which it found itself in.

Two speakers have emphasized that whatever may be your social programme, whatever revolutions you may bring about in the economic and political world, unless you have the dynamic inspiration of religion you will never succeed in this enterprise. Even if you are radically minded, ask yourself the question whether you are going to reduce human beings to mere political or social creatures, or would you give him some inner sanctity which nothing outward can touch? If you really believe in the divine spark in man, do not for a moment hesitate to accept the great tradition which has come to us of which Swami Vivekananda was the greatest exponent.

APPLIED RAMAKRISHNA

BY PROF. DR. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR

(Concluded from the previous issue)

THE VALUATION OF CREATIVITIES

While asking you to make an inventory of the leading men of Bihar and Bengal and their creativities I have made no distinction between profession and profession or occupation and occupation, in regard to the creative values. I have proceeded on the assumption that distinguished leaders are to be found in every walk of life and that all are to be treated as creative. One may easily challenge my orientations and question the validity of this standpoint. Is it possible, it may be asked, to treat the administrator, the lawyer or the medical practitioner as creative in the same sense as the novelist, the painter, the scientific researcher, the technical or industrial inventor, the philosopher and so forth? Is it proper to maintain that the creative values of the scientist, the discoverer, or the industrial expert are of the same rank as those of the capitalist or employer who exploits the technical or other intelligentsia with a dole or a pittance? It may be questioned, likewise, if the ordinary school or college teacher is as creative as the man who is making investigations in the arts or sciences, conducting researches in philosophy, history, etc. or the story-writer, the painter, the poet and the dramatist?

Who can assert that the political agitator who consecrates his life to the enfranchisement of the people, the labour organizer who is bent upon raising the standard of living of the working classes, the social reformer who is

fighting for the establishment of equality between the races, the classes and the castes, the religious missionary who is carrying from home to home the message of the dignity of man and of brotherhood in interhuman relations,—these embodiments of creative disequilibrium, and apostles of liberty, progress and revolution,—are but of the same worth and significance as the administrator, the judge, the lawyer, the banker, the factory magnate, the professor and the medical practitioner, all well fed and well groomed persons absorbed in the vested interests and addicted to the *status quo*?

And finally, who is prepared to vouch that the plans, projects or movements initiated by the official heads of industrial, commercial or banking establishments, government services, educational institutions etc. are their own creations, i.e. have come out of their own brains and that their subordinates, lieutenants, private secretaries, literary assistants, clerks, *mistris*, research committees or technical laboratories have not had the lion's share—although without recognition and adequate financial remuneration,—in the planning and execution of the ideas for which the bosses get the credit in public life?

These fine distinctions in valuation have been consciously ignored by me in connection with my present discussion. I have tried simply to emphasize, in the first place, that no matter what be the profession or occupation, Bengal like Bihar possesses a number of distinguished personalities who are usually

known as leaders of the country, political, industrial, cultural and social. In the second place, it has been brought home that among such persons the majority are, from the view-point of rupees-annas-pies, very modest and humble, i.e. poor. And if some of them do not happen to be poor at the moment of consideration they were poor while they were in their teens and even thirties. Many of them were charity-boys at school and college. They worked their way up with stipends or contributions in meals or fees. And further, the ancestors of the rich and distinguished men of to-day during the previous two generations were in very many instances much poorer. They were clerks, peasants and petty shop-keepers or artisans.

Poverty can therefore be no excuse for pessimism, despondency and inactivity. It is the poor that have conquered in the past and it is the poor that bid fair to conquer in the present. My futurism declares the prospects of world-conquest by the poor. This is the positive conclusion to which factual, pragmatic and statistical scientists are invited to apply their investigations.

THE ZONES OF POVERTY

Let me be perfectly clear and definite in my pronouncement. Bengali ideals and culture to-day are not being governed by the millionaire of the modern capitalistic *bourgeois* type, by the feudalistic zemindari aristocracy, or by the higher rungs of the administrative bureaucracy, although certain members of these groups are often in evidence through newspapers and public functions. The men and women who have conquered the hearts and heads of the Bengali people, who have been rendering Bengal and Bengali culture a world force, and by whom the Bengali people are slowly but steadily being

lifted to the level of a power among the powers of mankind are mainly the *adhpetā khawā* (half-mealer), non-income-tax-paying, poverty-stricken people, the children of clerks, peasants and artisans, born and bred in mud hovels and under leaking thatched roofs.

Perhaps you are suspecting that I am a believer in the 'blessings' of poverty, and hold a brief for the present order of inequalities, economic and political. Nothing is farther from my attitude. I am not waxing eloquent on poverty's sweet uses. It does not belong to my science or art to sing of poverty. I do not consider poverty to be a blessing. Poverty is by all means a curse and the poor man is not a blessed creature. There is nothing to be proud of or glorify in poverty. The despotism of the richer classes will have to be combated in every way. What I have been stressing all this time is that poverty is a tremendous social fact and a fact that cannot be overlooked. Perhaps it is an eternal fact. At any rate, it is a universal fact of the human world. But at the same time it so happens that creativeness or creativity is very widely distributed in the zones of poverty. The majority of the creative personalities of mankind, of men and women who generate the streams of evolutive disequilibrium in arts and sciences, industry and politics, social order and economic structure are to be found among the economically poorer specimens of humanity. It is this statistical fact to which I have been inviting your attention all this time. And this is an historical fact as well.

Statistical and historical data about this social fact have been indicated or rather hinted at about Bihar and Bengal. The subject is extensive enough for voluminous scientific researches. You will find similar statistical and historical data in every part of

India as well as in the world-famous zones of wealth and prosperity like England, France, Germany, America and other regions. It is a universal phenomenon. Perhaps one should call it a tragedy or paradox of civilization or 'cost of progress' that creativity or the spirituality of creativeness should be intimately associated with poverty or relative doses of poverty. Not every poor man indeed is creative. Nor, again, is every creative man poor. But a very significant proportion of the creatively spiritual or spiritually creative personalities of mankind here and there and everywhere has been found to be flourishing among the poorer classes, in the poverty-zones. The children of unknown persons, of men and women without means have turned out to be world-conquerors in more than one sense. The immediate future of Bengal, India, the world, entire mankind, belongs therefore to the poor man. It is the poor that are expected to conquer and govern the world.

PROGRESS THROUGH PARIAH CREATIVITIES

It is an almost universally valid proposition that the superior or Brahmin of to-day has very often grown out of or is blended with the inferior or *pariah* biological stocks of yesterday. And this enables me to state that the unknown, the lower, the inferior, the depressed, and the *pariah* of to-day is tending to grow into the renowned, the higher, the superior, the Brahmin of to-morrow. In other words, the world is being considerably created and conquered all the time by the *pariah*. It is to the *pariah*, therefore, that the future of mankind belongs in substantial measure and this not only from the standpoint of culture, i.e. social values, but also from that of flesh and blood.

As I am talking so emphatically of

the creative role of the *pariah* in the societies of the world there is every danger of my being misunderstood. People might suspect that perhaps I wish that *pariahdom* should be nursed by the society. Let me, therefore, declare in so many words that the social condition of the *pariah*, the inferior race, caste, community or class is not an enviable one whether in East or West. We may recall the status of the Roman Catholics in Great Britain down to 1829 and that of the Jews in Russia, Central Europe and the U.S.A. down to our own times. The Indian *pariah* is of course a byword,—and a world-notorious byword. The war against *pariahdom* of all varieties and degrees both in East and West, in other words, the war against ethnocentrism or Brahmanocracy in science and politics as well as culture is one of the first desiderata of a new world-planning in my sentiments as well as scientific researches. The abolition of all sorts of race-prejudices, social privileges and inequalities based on ethnic considerations, and distinctions between Occidental and Oriental peoples on the one hand, and the establishment of race-equality, class-equality and caste-equality in interhuman or social relations, on the other, are two of the fundamental planks in my scheme for national and international reconstruction.¹

But in the meantime, it is impossible to overlook or ignore race-inequalities, race-prejudices, ethnic chauvinism, the doctrine of race-superiority, inferiority complex, ethnocentrism, Brahmanocracy, etc. as positive facts of the world-order in all regions and in all ages. We have seen before that poverty is likewise a social fact of universal and eternal dimensions. It is, therefore,

¹ B. K. Sarkar: *The Sociology of Races, Cultures and Human Progress* (Berlin, 1922; Calcutta, 1939).

simply as a fact of world-history and as a solid reality of cultural progress that I maintain that the *pariah*, the inferior, the non-Brahmin, like the economically poor, has in many instances in every country furnished the flesh and blood of the alleged superiors or Brahmins. It is proven that the alleged *varna*-superiority, physico-physiognomic superiority of the Brahmin is a myth. The so-called higher castes are not very often higher than the alleged inferior castes in flesh and blood. The *pariah's* biological contributions to the make-up of the non-*pariah* and his flesh and blood contacts with the Brahmin are incontestable realities. Both biologically as well as sociologically and not merely sociologically, the *pariah* creativities are some of the greatest facts of universal culture or world-progress. The racial 'distances' between the 'socially' lower and the 'socially' higher are not as wide and deep as imagined by both. All the same, the social *pariahdom* is like poverty to be combated and annihilated by every possible means in every region.

PRAGMATIC PATHS OF PROGRESS

There is a kind of religion or philosophy which teaches us to cultivate patience, more patience, still more patience. Entire life is to be spent in patience in order that some relief may come in the next life. 'You are poor or unlucky or miserable or depressed to-day,' it says, 'but pray and pray and pray so that in the next life you may taste a little bit of wealth, position or dignity.' The Christian does not believe that man is reborn. He has therefore no next life, but he believes in the other world. This kind of philosophy counsels him that in the existence after death, whatever it be, in Heaven the poor man, the unfortunate man is going to have a reward. Then there is another type of mentality. It says, 'You are a poor

man or a *pariah* to-day because you did some wrong in a past life. Therefore try to do something good now so that hereafter you may be born prosperous or superior or perhaps may not be born at all.'

I do not object to any of these philosophies, religions or mentalities. Mankind is exceedingly varied in intelligence, emotions, and aptitudes. The distresses, miseries and troubles of men and women are likewise extremely diverse. So philosophies of all sorts must each have a justification, as serving some particular objects and meeting some special needs. These philosophies, calculated as they are to render relief to suffering individuals, perhaps have succeeded and even now succeed in offering consolation and strength to thousand and one persons. I am happy that some sort of antidote to or compensation for poverty, humiliation, worry and distress can after all be found in such ideologies.

But so far as I am concerned my personality cannot get relief from such philosophies. I am an admirer of the poet Robert Browning, and I consider some of his messages to be fraught with wonderful idealism, nay, constructive energism. And yet it is difficult for me to swallow his spiritual recipe which says,

On the earth the broken arcs,

In the heavens a perfect round !

According to Browning the arcs, i.e. the spheres, globes or round objects may be seen to be scattered all about us in broken parts, fragments, crooked particles and so forth. But if one looks to the sky one finds no crookedness, no sharp-edged angularities, no uneven and rough particles. Everything in the sky is round, whole, integral, smooth and perfect. The moral : Tolerate all the angularities of the here below, because in sooth everything up above is sym-

metrical, spherical and round. It is in such a mood that one is advised to believe that 'All is well on Earth' because 'God is in his Heaven.' My philosophy is not of this type. God may be in his Heaven for all that we know. It is only a hearsay. But the reality is the troubles, the dirt, the squalor, the poverty, disease, mean-nesses, crotchettinesses, and thousand other physical and social angularities or miseries of life. They require to be removed, abolished, redressed or straightened here and now. One cannot get any consolation because the sky is a perfect sphere, blue, healthy, bright, while this earth is nothing but mud hovels broken up with holes and infested with bugs and scorpions, or touch-me-nots, anti-Oriental Immigration Acts, Brahmanocracy, Nordic superiority, 'white man's burden.' All these iniquities and injustices, all these 'broken arcs' must have to be polished off our earthly earth. And all this has to be accomplished not in a future life, not in an existence after death, not after an eventual rebirth but in this very life while we are still alive. The prosperity, happiness, social dignity, etc. of the 'perfect round' have to be delivered to mankind right here and in this very life.

My message about the world-conquests by the poor does not want anybody to gaze into the skies or look up to Heaven for the enjoyment of prosperity. The poor is already governing the world-culture as a matter of fact, as we have seen. It is in this world and not in the next that his creativeness is opening up new vistas for men and women. Similarly, my message about the creative role of the *pariah* does not necessitate a prayer to God for redress in some next life or other world. The *pariah* has been demonstrated to be one of the

creators of the Brahmin in this very life and on this very earth. These messages of hope are based on the most solid and positive foundations. My Applied Ramakrishna does not rest on vague hallucinations and dreams about infinite voids. It has its moorings in the actual struggles and achievements of the human beings of flesh and blood. The conquests by the poor and the *pariah* are pragmatic realities. The dimensions of these conquests are perhaps not wide and extensive and at times too minute to be perceptible. But the pragmatic paths of progress that are being perpetually trodden are unmistakably clear. They remain to-day as yesterday to be widened, straightened and smoothened for fresh conquests by the teeming millions of the poor and the *pariah*.

THE SOCIOLOGY OF ACADEMIC FAILURES

I shall now talk of the unfortunates and the miserables in other spheres. You send your boys and girls to schools and colleges and you are shocked if they fail in examinations. Academic failure certainly is a misery. Not everybody who is going to schools and colleges is likely to be an academic success. But my orientations to the passed and plucked are rather peculiar. I believe that schools and colleges, no matter whether they are in India, Europe or America, are not the only laboratories for trying the mettle of young people, for testing their worth, and for examining their values. As in other sociologies or social philosophies, in the sociology of academic failures also my position is anything but conventional.

Regrettably enough, in India if we get plucked in a school examination, our future seems blocked. Yet I want to invite your attention to the fact that some of the most prominent men of business in India have come from the plucked classes. Examine their academic

worth and find out what their school qualifications were. Not many of the most prominent men of Bengal in other lines were successes by the school test, by the University standard. They managed somehow to get the pass marks and very many of them were failures. Therefore, in my Applied Ramakrishna I do not try to ignore the 'broken arcs,' the failures of life. Rather, I accept them as stubborn facts. But I am pragmatically convinced of other facts at the same time. One may be a failure at school or college, but one can still achieve a great success in another field. People do not realize this and therefore parents as well as young men are naturally very pessimistic.

There are to-day in India many lines of activity which were unknown thirty-five years ago. People are now making money even as gymnasts, i.e. as experts in physical culture. There are some fifteen hundred secondary schools in Bengal, each of which needs a professor in physical culture, and the time is coming when every secondary school will have to be provided with a trained teacher for military exercises. One may have been a failure in English language, geometry, history, and so forth. But if one has developed strong muscles one's future is likely to be assured.

I may next speak of journalism. The press is a tremendous creative and spiritual force in India to-day. India's journalism is not only a profession but it is a power that has won recognition throughout the world. About 1905 journalism, as we understand it to-day, was practically non-existent in India. Look to the biography of the journalists. Some of them are the greatest patriots and profoundest re-makers of India. What are their academic qualifications? Not everybody is an M.A., not everybody is a Matric even. Yet many of them have developed qualifications,

intellectual and moral, such as no schools and colleges and University degrees could supply.

Take the business career. You generally believe that in modern times Bengalis, nay, Indians have been becoming poorer. Facts, however, are quite otherwise. The number of lines that have grown during the last thirty-five years or so in commerce and industry is remarkable. We did not know at the time of the *Sivadeshi* revolution (1905) the names of many of these businesses. But we find to-day mills, factories, machine-shops, banks, insurance companies, export and import offices, transport concerns, mining enterprises and so forth. These establishments and institutions in different places in the districts of Bengal, Bihar and other parts of India have been creating new and unheard-of jobs. Therefore, one may be likely to be a failure in certain lines, but that does not mean that one is bound to be a failure in all lines.

I shall now speak of music. There was a time when music was supposed to be the luxury of the rich. But already there are several hundred men and women in Calcutta who are making a living by giving private lessons in music. Music has grown into a career and a respectable profession. Whether you are a boy or girl, you may fail in the Matriculation examination, but if somehow you have your ears and voice developed and fingers trained, you are already laying the foundations of a career for yourself.

Every human being is a bundle of many personalities, a complex of fifty different human beings, so to say, i.e. in every person you have so many different characteristics, aptitudes, potentialities, orientations. You may fail in five different lines but there are still forty-five other lines in your personality

by which you can be a success. But, this success you are likely to achieve not in heaven, not in another life, but in this life, first, as a money-making animal, and, in the second place, as a person who deserves respect. This, then, is another item of verification in my Applied Ramakrishna as the gospel of hope and conquests for suffering mankind.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF UPASANA

BY PRABHAKARA TRIVEDI, M.A., SASTRY

I suppose that one of the fundamental characteristics of the human mind, as distinguished from that of the animal, is that while the latter appears to be perfectly satisfied with the present, the former often crosses its narrow boundaries and is never content without linking the present with the past and the future. In Shelley's words the most important thing about our mental life is that 'we look before and after.' This special feature of the human mind—the curiosity to know more than what is actually presented to us—has, in fact, been responsible for the entire growth of human civilization.

Man began as a worshipper of Nature, but, thanks to this inquisitive character of his intellect, he has now reached a stage where he claims to have become the master of Nature and has actually enhanced his comforts and luxuries a thousandfold through the agency of science. But, paradoxical though it may appear, the tremendous triumph of science is accompanied by an equally great failure in so far as science no longer remains to be merely a means of enhancing human comforts, but has become, at the same time, a terrible weapon of destruction. The question, therefore, arises whether human control over Nature, expressing itself in the fastest aeroplanes, the most complicated armaments of modern warfare, and the like, is the only standard of

civilization, and if so, whether civilization is worth the dignity it usually enjoys.

The most important aspect of civilization, it would appear, in the light of these considerations, is the one leading to the best conceptions of morality and religion in so far as the latter can render life immensely happier even in the scientifically backward societies, while their total absence may lead to perpetual fear and misery, as abundantly exemplified by the modern war, even with the best gifts of science we can boast of. For, power misused leads to the worst of results imaginable and morality and religion, unfettered by the social and political brick walls of caste, creed and nation etc. are the only things that can prevent power from being misused and encourage a better employment of the same.

The secret of this tremendous efficacy of religion (from which morality cannot ultimately be separated) to render individual and social life more peaceful and happy, constitutes, however, from a certain standpoint, also its weakest point. It gives solace and courage to the individual in his trying days by promising a life even beyond the grave and by guaranteeing an ultimate triumph of righteousness over the forces of evil. It tends, further, to keep social relations smoother by recognizing values higher than the mundane ones, an as-

piration for which on the part of any individual, whatever his or her position otherwise, need hardly come into conflict with another's.

But just these good points in religion give rise to a set of questions which have so far baffled all human attempts at their final settlement, and there is every reason to doubt whether any answer to them, one way or the other, will ever carry a universal conviction with it. Is there another side to the mysterious veil of death? If so, what may be its character, and how are we to know it? What guarantee is there that the forces of goodness will ultimately conquer those of evil? Is there any supernatural power such as God? If so, is He always conscious of all the strifes and miseries of humanity and the rest of the living order? Is He pleased with one set of actions and displeased with another? What set of actions does really please Him? And what exactly can be the consequences of His pleasure and displeasure? How can we best behave in this world and to what effect? What, in short, is the significance of life and existence? These are some of the questions, an absolutely sure answer to which would, I believe, satisfy us more than any other gain on the surface of the earth. But the most important as these questions are, the most difficult have they proved for human intellect to handle. As the history of philosophy has abundantly shown, the ultimate postulates of religion can neither be proved nor disproved on rational grounds.

Now, howsoever great the failure or success of metaphysics in this connection, and whatever its final verdict on these questions, the psychologist, at any rate, can safely avoid them and undertake to perform an humbler task. As his enquiries belong to the empirical level, the questions he sets himself to

answer are: Are there any persons who have unshaken faith in the fundamental postulates of religion? Do they follow any practical course calculated to realize the *summum bonum* of life as promised by religion? If so, how far and in what respect does this particular course of life affect their personality as a whole? How far does Upasana, in other words, influence the physical, mental and temperamental aspects of the religious aspirant? I believe that the first two of the foregoing set of questions can easily be answered in the affirmative. We shall consequently proceed with the enquiry embodied in the last question.

Now, the first thing to note about the religious aspirant, the would-be mystic, is that he is not led to follow any such course of life because he is philosophically convinced of the validity of its aims and the genuineness of its utility. Philosophical conviction may accompany or follow it and when it does so, it may well intensify his efforts. But it may even be totally absent. What goads him on to his path is an inexplicable inner urge—it is the play of his *Samskaras*, to express it in Indian terminology. Psychologically, it is precedent to, and decidedly more powerful than the philosophical conviction, if he has any. We all see people suffering and dying before our eyes. Some of us also seek to philosophize over it. But suffering and death delivered their real message only to the Great Buddha, and with such a tremendous force that it left an immortal effect on the entire history of human civilization.

When the mystic, whatever the cause or causes that led him on to this path, is sufficiently advanced, the most perceptible thing about him is that he acquires a very sweet personality, at any rate, by far the sweeter than what he possessed before. We shall now

attempt to make a psychological analysis of the circumstances that favour the mystic in making this valuable acquisition.

In his arduous journey to self-realization (or God-realization) the mystic claims, at certain stages, to have some supernormal experiences which, whatever their objective validity, fill him with a sort of celestial joy of the highest intensity. It is quite open for us, outsiders, to condemn all such experiences as illusions, delusions and so on and so forth. But it may well be suggested that, under any circumstance, there is nothing unreasonable in admitting the occurrence of such subjective experiences, unless we have positive proof to show that all such claims are initiated simply by a desire to command respect from the public. It is evidently beyond the scope of this short paper to discuss the objective validity of any such supernormal experiences. But we contend that from the psychological standpoint even an illusion is as important an experience as a case of valid cognition in so far as the former, unless it be cancelled, commands the same emotional reactions as the latter. We take it, therefore, that mystic experiences, even if they lack any objective counterpart, are psychologically as genuine as any other and that there is nothing unusual in the mystic being left with a consequent joy and mental peace which are entirely his own.

Before we proceed to analyse this situation further, it may be observed that though the mystic usually believes in a benevolent personal God, he may attain the joy just referred to even without so doing. For, just as we enter the region of the mind deeper and deeper, the more we forget our body,—i.e. to the extent to which all bodily disturbances stop, we enter, as it were, the region of the pure effulgent

self and experience its eternal bliss and grandeur more intensely—the more successful we are in keeping the mind at perfect rest.

Yada pancha'vatishtante, jnanani
manasa saha,
Buddhischa na vicheshtate, tam
ahuh paramam gatim,
Tam yogam iti manyante sthiram
indriya—dharanam
(Katha Up. II. iii. 10-11).

And this need not imply a belief in a personal God. (This is what is technically known as Nirguna-Upasana).

This joy of the mystic, it need hardly be pointed out, is unlike anything that can be shared on the ordinary plane of consciousness. Because of its absolute purity and the height of its intensity, it leaves a deeper and more lasting impression on the mystic's mind than what the object-dependent pleasures assigned to our lot can do. And a repetition of these impressions results, in the long run, in the constant inner joy and mental peace which is so prominently reflected on the mystic's face.

We hope, it will now be agreed that because of this peculiar inner joy, the mystic may even be said to be 'emotionally satisfied' on a plane higher than that of ours. This statement seems to require a word of explanation. It is a well-known fact that at different stages in our life, we feel a craving, as it were, for certain things which, in a very restricted sense, may even be designated as the 'demands of the flesh.' Loving parents, obedient wife, healthy, good-looking and well-behaved children, position in society, name and fame and a host of such other things are the objects of such demands at different stages in life. These demands, when legitimately met and in a fair proportion, substantially contribute to our happiness and then alone we may be said to be emotionally satisfied.

To be 'emotionally satisfied' it is not necessary, however, that in every case each and every one of such demands should be met. For, though it would appear that all the objects just referred to and dozens more are necessary to make us completely happy, the fact is that, except in very few cases, our interest in each one of them is not equally distributed so that some one or the other of them is sure to get predominance over the rest. And the logic of the situation remaining the same, they get consciously or unconsciously, arranged as it were, in point of their importance. This becomes specially apparent when a clash between two conflicting interests of one and the same individual takes place. The hierarchy of the objects of our desire, of course, differs substantially in its constitution or arrangement from individual to individual, so much so that what enjoys the first place with one individual may be degraded to a very low level by another. Sri Ramachandra, for example, exiled his wife—the proverbially ideal Hindu wife Sita—merely because of the murmuring of a poor citizen of Ayodhya. King Edward the VIII, (or the Duke of Windsor, as he is now called) gave up on the other hand, the biggest empire on the surface of the earth to-day in preference to his wife.

What, however, we intend to drive at in this connection is the fact that sometimes any one or two of such objects of our desire get such a disproportionate predominance over the rest that the latter appear as negligible in comparison with the former, and they sometimes even lose their entire claim over the individual's attention. A very prominent scientist of our country (Sir P. C. Ray), for instance, is reported, as an explanation of his celebrity, to have said, 'My one wife

is Chemistry; and I cannot love two wives.' In such cases the happiness or otherwise of the individual depends almost entirely upon his success or failure in realizing the object in which his entire interest is invested.

Now this is exactly the case with the mystic. His very decision to set out in the most arduous, solitary and endless journey of Upasana already implies that he has fully recognized some value or values higher than the mundane ones and that he is determined to realize the former to the utter disregard, if necessary, of the entire set of the latter class. Worldly gain or loss, therefore, does not carry much weight for him. On the other hand, if at certain stages of his journey he is fortunate enough to get some assurance of his nearing the destination, he is naturally filled with an overpowering joy, the unique character of which has actually been referred to. The mystic, in this sense, is therefore, 'emotionally satisfied,' and he is satisfied on a higher plane in so far as the object of his undivided love is so sublime and absolutely free from the conflicts and the wear and tear to which all the rest on the empirical level is necessarily subjected. The mystic, of course, must have proceeded a long way before the 'demands of the flesh' lose their entire hold on his mind. But it is just on this stage that he is the object of our psychological study.

Now, it is a psychological commonplace that one who is emotionally satisfied is by far more polite in his manners than those who fall in the opposite group. The mystic, consequently, is by far more polite—though his politeness is diametrically opposed to the artificial one—than the people of the common run. Moreover, the mystic's approach to the Absolute is, in a sense, more emotional than intellectual. This naturally softens his heart to the effect that he

comes to have a genuine sympathy for the entire living order. This is exactly what accounts for the milky heart of the mystics and the saints which is so prominently exemplified in their lives.

Thus the perfect mental peace and constant inner joy—which some supernatural experiences as indications of his nearing the destination yield him,—playing on his face, uncommon politeness in his manners, because of his emotional satisfaction on a higher plane, and a genuine sympathy for one and all, combine together to endow the mystic with the sweetest personality one can imagine.

We have touched so far only the temperamental aspect of the mystic's personality as influenced by Upasana. But the other aspects of his personality, the physical and intellectual ones, it must now be added, are by no means less influenced.

If proper diet, healthy surrounding, good sanitary sense, and the regularity of habits be some of the most important factors that contribute to good health, the mystic, of all other persons, must naturally possess a very healthy physique. But besides these, he has in this connection certain important advantages over the common man.

It is established beyond doubt that emotions have very pronounced effect on our body and mind, so much so that if they are violent and sudden, they may prove, as Srimat Kuvalayananda has convincingly shown, even deadly. And even when they are not so powerful, 'they may so affect the nervous system that some disease may appear as a consequence' (*Asanas* p. 40). In short, emotions like anger, fear, love and hatred etc., 'through the degeneration of the nervous system, and also of the ductless glands, prove to be a serious disturbance to the health of the human body' (Ibid. p. 40). The mystic, of

all other persons, being perfectly free from all such disturbing factors, enjoys a peace of mind which is so beneficial to the physical health. Besides, all emotions, as the same author rightly observes, are not injurious. 'Joy and happiness, kept within proper limits, are of great help in building a healthy nervous system. Devotion to the Lord, or in fact to any principle of life that ensures mental peace, enables a person to maintain healthy and stable nerves' (Ibid. p. 417). It will now be found that such factors which exercise a healthy influence on the nervous system naturally fall to the lot of the mystic. Thus the absence of all the disturbing factors like the emotions of anger, fear and love etc., coupled with the presence of those which exercise a healthy influence on the body, ensure the best of physical health to the mystic.

We can now afford to give but a very brief consideration to the questions whether Upasana exercises any influence, favourable or otherwise, even on the intellectual aspect of the mystic's personality. First of all it is to be noted that the religious aspirant—the mystic—is also one amongst us, an individual among other individuals, and does not claim to belong to any higher order of being. As such, he shares, to begin with, all the peculiarities of mind, body and temperament that go to constitute a personality. If, as a majority of psychologists holds, we are born with the differences in our own intellectual capacity—as also with the different physical constitutions—the mystic can be no exception to it. But whatever the differences in our natural gifts, there is undoubtedly, in each and every case, considerable scope both for improvement and degeneration. And one does not know where the limits for these can be set.

Now, if Upasana is no substitute for

study and information, nor are the latter the same thing as the intellect. For less educated and less informed persons may be more intelligent than those who are better informed. If intellect, therefore, is but a clear vision of the mind which can see things further ahead, and can probe deeper into problems called intellectual, then it can very safely be laid down that there is absolutely nothing in Upasana that can block or weaken this vision and that there is much in it that can clear and strengthen the same in so far as, as we have already seen, Upasana ensures the best of physical and temperamental health and as such frees the mystic from all the physical and emotional disturbances—the killing anxieties and worries, which influence the mind so adversely.

This is, however, a very moderate statement of things. Personally speaking, I go further and believe with William James that some of the mystic experiences result in what he calls the 'intellectual illumination' of the mystic. (*The Varieties of Religious Experiences*). If that be so, a very significant fact, namely, that all the masterpieces of some of our vernaculars—particularly Hindi and Marathi—were brought out by the mystics—Tulasidasa and Suradasa, Jnaneshvara and Tukarama—can well be accounted for.

Though the virtues and acquisitions of the mystic, as briefly brought out in the preceding pages, are of real value in themselves, from the mystic's standpoint, it must clearly be borne in mind, they are but by-products—his real object of achievement being by far the highest and the noblest thing that human mind has ever been able to conceive. If, therefore, we refrained ourselves from saying anything definitely about the latter, it is simply because it falls outside the scope of the present paper, and further, because that is the only course open to us as mere on-lookers.

We shall now conclude this article with a very brief reference to the important question: Is the mystic unfit for other walks of life? We think that, in a certain case, he is. For, he may have conscientious objection to some professions or walks of life and may be disinterested in most of the rest for reasons afore-said. But if, on the other hand, he happens to interest himself in some nobler task like the acquisition and propagation of knowledge and hundred and one ways of social service and the rest, he is decidedly better fitted by virtue of his physical, mental and temperamental health and the ideal of disinterested service that he must in that case cherish.



THE LIVING PAST

By ELIOT C. CLARK

Spirit projects itself so that it may become aware of itself. The formless manifests as form; the idea and its expression are inseparable.

Art is an intermediary; the revelation of the invisible by means of the visible. Its function is to elevate the consciousness so that it may become attuned to its Source. The sense is but a mode or instrument of awareness; art is thus a means of concentration and realization; the form but the mode of revealing the formless. Sense is not denied but purified, forming the miraculous bridge from the sensuous to the supersensuous. The 'I' or the perceiving consciousness and the object of perception unite in oneness; the ego becomes absorbed in its Source.

Art is a means of revelation; the finite symbol of the infinite; the particular representation of the universal. Ritual and formal worship is a mode of awakening. To deny the image is to deny the witness. The idol comes to life in the consciousness of the beholder. Apart from the witness it has no meaning.

Only so can the great art of the past be rejuvenated and reborn; not in archaeological evaluation or abstract æsthetics; not in historical retrospect or erudite judgement but in living realization, the unitary meeting of the material form and the formless spirit. This direct perception born in the crucible of experience, releases consciousness from the boundaries of form, and frees itself in formlessness.

Art and life are one. Like all modes of manifestation its expression may lead to liberation or bondage. We rise by the same instruments by means of which

we fall. This is not to deny the mode or the intermediary, which would be but to deny the Source from which it rises.

It is in the separation of the modes of realization that modern civilization has lost its integral unity. Each specialization dwells within the prison of its own limitations. Power is divorced from co-operation; science separated from spirit; philosophy lives in its own abstraction; religion is incarcerated in the ruins of the temple; art is blinded by appearance. Spirit denies its habitation; the body the spirit; the realization its sense; the sense its Source. The superimposition of idea has created the boundaries of its own determination. Released from the fetters of the ego, freedom springs forth from its Source spontaneously.

All forms of expression are born from the formless, art but a means of bringing forth that which is indwelling, the intuitive radiation of the ineffable Presence, the joyful ebullition of its own Spirit.

Art is a universal language. Although choosing the individual as its vehicle of expression its significance is registered by its response, the image of its own self. Without appreciation art perishes. It is germinated from the unformed aspiration, the quickening of life, the desire of realization, the instinctive endeavour to know the Self. The advent of great individuals as such is the culmination of a cycle rather than its inception, the flower of the tree which has given it bloom. Its germination ceases when it is taken for granted and neglected, the roots of its Source unwatered and unsung.

Not merely by ordination can art be engendered, not by political proclamation or the vanity of possession, not by the exclusiveness or the aggrandizement of the cultured few. Art is communion, its sanctuary the soul; its fuel the divine fire. Somewhere between heaven and earth its cradle, the empyrean of the free, the ineffable land of heart's desire. So only does it meet in union.

Has it vanished then from earth that the worshipper can no longer see the image? Is the shrine without its God? Has the incense lost its meaning? Is will to power its own reward or the abyss of its own illusion? Are fields but

tilled for cannon fodder, the flowers forgotten?

For shame that children of earth have not remembered Heaven, herded in servility of hatred born.

Only in faith will the idol come to life; not in indolent credulity, but in the living verity of its creator; not the servile worship of the hidden God but in His revelation.

From the timelessness of the eternal silence the illumined Presence speaks again. The voice of the past becomes the present.

'Om I will remember, that which was done, remember.'

GEOGRAPHICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF GAUDA.

By DR. DEBENDRA CHANDRA DAS GUPTA, M.A., ED.D. (Calif.)

[The archaic spellings found in the authorities quoted as well as other peculiarities are retained in accordance with the expressed desire of the writer.—Ed.]

Gauda, the famous city, the capital of Bengal, for over two millenniums, under the Hindu and the Moslem kings met with an irrevocable catastrophe in the year 1575 A.D. in the shape of a terrible plague which converted the city of palaces practically into a lonely desert. Slowly but surely, its decline followed till it became a name in history.

The term Gauda originally signified 'territory,' but it later on came to mean a capital city. This is evident from Kalhana Mishra's *Raja Tarangini*, where we are told that Jayapida, the exiled king of Cashmere, gave away to his father-in-law the five Gaudas or pieces of territories. An extract bearing upon the point is given below. 'He (Jayapida) showed there his valour by defeating, even without preparation, the

five Gauda chiefs, and by making his father-in-law their sovereign.'

Mr. H. Blochmann substantially sustains the same thesis. According to him Lakhnnavati was so called after the name of Lakhman Sen, a king of Bengal and its adjacent territories, more accurately a part of Bengal.² Tāranātha, a Tibetan authority on the history of Buddhism in Bengal, also upholds the same opinion. According to him Gauda meant a territory. From Tāranātha we learn that Bindusara, the son of Chandra Gupta, was born in the Gauda country comprising the modern north Bengal which

¹ Kalhana Mishra: *Raja Tarangini* tr. by Dr. Stein, vol. I. p. 163.

² H. Blochmann: *Contributions to the Geography and History of Bengal* p. 8.

was evidently under the dominion of Chandra Gupta.³

The authorities as to the identity and existence of Gauda are very conflicting. Târanâtha who had plenty of opportunity of studying the original documents believes in the existence of Gauda before the Christian era, and he is supported by Monahan. Another authority, Mr. McCrindle brings it down chronologically. He quotes Ptolemy to justify the opinion that there was a station at the confluence of the Mahânandâ and the Ganges; but there was no city of the name of Gauda. 'Well, then, Kalindi is found to be a name applied to an arm of the Ganges which communicates with the Mahânandâ, and which surrounds on the north the large island formed by the Mahânandâ and Ganges, where once stood the famous city of Gauda or Gaur, now in ruins. Gauda was not in existence in Ptolemy's time, but there may have been there a station with which if not with the river itself the indication of the table would agree.'⁴ These authorities while differing as to the identity, do not differ as to the existence of Gauda: Gauda was there, no matter whether an island, city or a country.

Fantastically enough one great authority, Colebrooke, traces the origin of the term 'Gauda' to Gur or molasses—a commodity which, by the by, is produced in abundance in Bengal. The whole of this relevant passage may be inserted here. 'Gaur, the ancient name of the capital of Bengal, and of the province itself, is apparently derived from Gur, which, both in the ancient and modern languages of India, signifies raw sugar. From the Sanskrit term for manufactured sugar (Sharkara) are derived

Persian, Greek, Latin, and modern European names of the cane and its produce. Even the Arabic term may be also deduced from Sanskrit word (Khand), which bears the same signification.'⁵

In subsequent history Gauda assumed different names—Lakhnawati, Jannat-abad (abode of paradise), Fatchabad, Husainabad, and Nusratabad. Although, as previously noted, historians like Târanâtha referred to the pre-Christian existence of Gauda, we have no authentic date of its origin or name of its founder. The Muhammadan historian Ghulam Husain Salim refers to one Sangaldip from Koochbehar as the founder of the city. 'The city of Lakhnauti, which in past times was the capital of Bengal, was founded by Sangaldib. . . . Towards the end of his reign, a person named Sangaldib emerging from the environs of Kuch, which adjoins the limits of Bengal, brought to his subjection, first the countries of Bengal and Behar, and then fighting against Kedar became victorious, and building the city of Lakhnauti, made it his capital.'⁶

James Rennell identifies Gauda with the Gangia Regia of Ptolemy and believes in the existence of pre-Christian Gauda. 'Gour, called also Lakhnauti, the ancient capital of Bengal and supposed to be the Gangia regia of Ptolemy, stood on the left bank of the Ganges, It was the capital of Bengal 730 years before Christ.'⁷

The site of the city of Gauda was exceptionally⁸ favourable from the strategic, and economic point of view. It was situated on the deltaic land of

³ Colebrooke: *Remarks on the Husbandry and Internal Commerce of Bengal* p. 126.

⁴ Ghulam Husain Salim: *A History of Bengal* tr. by Maulavi Abdu Salam pp. 24-25.

⁵ James Rennell: *Map of Hindoostan* p. 55.

³ F. J. Monahan: *Early History of Bengal* pp. 24-25.

⁴ J. W. McCrindle: *Ancient India as Described by Ptolemy* p. 215.

the Mahānandā and the Ganges and it was within the reach of the region beyond through a network of tributary rivers. From the strategic standpoint, it was very favourable to the task of defending Bengal and Bihar. From the hygienic standpoint, it was not equally fortunate, as the sewage of the city was dumped into the marshy land on the east of the city. The marshy land in question is discussed as Chhatiāpatiā in *Āin-i-Akbari* also known as Kallak Sayā.⁸ This gradually made the city more and more unhealthy till it was totally deserted in 1575 A.D. owing to the outbreak of the epidemic.

Commenting on the site of Gauda Rennell says, 'The situation of Gour was highly convenient for the capital of Bengal and Behar, as united under one government being nearly central with respect to the populous parts of those provinces; and nearer the junction of the principal rivers that compose that extraordinary inland navigation, for which those provinces are famed; and moreover, secured by the Ganges and other rivers, on the only quarter from which Bengal has any cause for apprehension.'⁹ Another authority Mr. Hamilton entertains almost precisely the same opinion.¹⁰

From the date of its foundation down to the year 1203 A.D. when Bukhtyar Khiliji conquered Bengal, the commercial connection between the capital city and its hinterland was maintained through boats; and after Bukhtyar assumed the insignia of royalty under the title of Ghyasuddin, he constructed two main roads connecting his capital Gauda with Diwkot in the east and Lakhan-or in the

west. These facts are related in the *Nasiri-i-Tabakat*. From the same authoritative source we learn that in the thirteenth century the regions lying on the west of the Ganges were called Râl in which there was the important city of Lakhan-or; and in the eastern region of the Ganges, the territory of Barind where was also the city of Diwkot. In order to insure the security of Gauda against the inundation of the Ganges the Sultan constructed two embankments, the one connecting the capital with Lakhan-or and the other with Diwkot. This served the double purpose of protecting the capital against inundation and of facilitating the passage from the hinterland to the capital. 'The territory of Lakhanawati has two wings on either side of the river Gang. The western side they call Râl (Rârh), and the city of Lakhan-or lies on that side; and the eastern side they call Barind (Barindah), and the city of Diw-Kot is on that side. From Lakhanawati to the gate of the city of Lakhan-or, on the one side, and, as far as Diw-Kot, on the other side he, Sultan Ghiyas-Ud-Din, 'Iwaz [caused] an embankment [to be] constructed, extending about ten days' Journey, for this reason, that, in the rainy season, the whole of that tract becomes inundated, and that route is filled with mud-swamps and morass; and, if it were not for these dykes, it would be impossible [for people] to carry out their intentions, or reach various structures and inhabited places except by means of boats. From this time through the construction of those embankments, the route was opened up to the people at large.'¹¹

It is quite evident that Ghyasuddin built the highways referred to above

⁸ H. Blochmann: *Contributions to the Geography and History of Bengal* p. 5.

⁹ James Rennell: *Map of Hindoostan* p. 56.

¹⁰ Walter Hamilton: *Geographical Statistical and Historical Description of Hindoostan* vol. I, p. 229.

¹¹ Maulana Minhaj-ud-Din, Abu-umr-i-Usman: *Tabakat-i-Nasiri*, tr. by Major H. Raverty, pp. 584-585.

only when he felt his position, from the military standpoint, thoroughly secured. His Hindu predecessors were thoroughly alive to the difficulties experienced by the citizens of the capital as well as by the people inhabiting the hinterland from want of communication connecting those regions to the capital; but they did not build these highways for military reasons. To use a modern phraseology, they followed the doctrine of 'safety first.' The prudent strategic considerations overbore the considerations of economy. When Sultan Ghyasuddin was the ruler of Bengal the whole of northern India was a homogeneous unit under the supreme Muslim ruler of Ghor. His standpoint was radically different from those of the Hindu rulers who were petty independent sovereigns perpetually afraid of the encroachments on the part of their fellow rulers—their neighbours and rivals.

The city of Diwkot already mentioned in this connection was identified by Mr. Buchanan with an old fort in the vicinity of Damdama, on the left bank of the river Purnabhava in the district of Dinajpur. Over and above there is also a Pargana bearing the same name in the locality—a fact which lends an additional support to the existence of the city. Unfortunately the sister city of Lakhan—or has not yet been identified although some entertain a guess that it might have existed in the district of Birbhum.

This historic city was unmistakably one of huge dimensions having spacious suburbs, like all other capital cities whether ancient or modern. Mr. Creighton, who visited it as early as 1786 A.D., tells us that its length was ten miles and breadth one mile to a mile and a half. Mr. Walter Hamilton, who visited it the next year, states that it was twenty square miles in area.

Ravenshaw, who saw it in 1865, agrees with both the authorities referred to above as to the dimensions of the city. According to him 'The walled city was probably about ten miles long, by one mile and a half broad, but the environs extended to twenty miles in length by three or four in width.'¹² A different dimension is given by the *Imperial Gazetteer* of 1908, according to which the city with its suburbs had an area of twenty-two to thirty square miles; but the city proper was seven and a half miles in length and one to two miles in breadth.¹³

The geographical location of the city was an extremely favourable one, making it practically impregnable against attacks. On three sides it was defended by nature and on one side it had to be defended by men through artificial means of fortification. On the east and south of the city there flew the river Mahananda and on the west the river Ganges. A fortified wall protected the city on the north. Over and above high artificial embankments on the east, west and the south served as a means of protection against inundation as well as intrusion of enemies.

We have no knowledge of the topographic growth of the city during the Hindu period; and of the Muhammadan period, though inadequate, we have some knowledge.

The Muhammadan authorities incidentally refer to Gauda, its fortifications and other details. As we have already said, Bukhtyar Khilji constructed two embankments connecting the capital to the hinterland. The dykes of the embankments were forty-five feet in height and one hundred and eighty to two hundred feet in breadth. On the

¹² John Henry Ravenshaw: *Gaur; Its Ruins and Inscriptions* p. 2.

¹³ *The Imperial Gazetteers of India*, vol. xii, p. 188.

summits of the embankments innumerable buildings testifying to the fact that they were erected for the purpose of accommodating excess of population in the city or for the purpose of protection against military invasion or for both. When Mr. Creighton visited the city in 1786 A.D., the whole of the masonry disappeared and the embankments were covered with dense forest.

On the eastern side of the city there were parallel lines of embankments separated by a deep moat, one hundred and fifty yards wide. Mr. Ravenshaw, who visited it in 1865, tells us that in the western side of the city there were openings facilitating passages to the citizens. These were due to the action of the Ganges. There were also two openings in the centre of the south and the north embankments which served the same purpose. At the northern entrance the gates were in complete ruins, though in the south the Kutwali gate was still standing at a height of fifty-one feet above the ground.¹⁴ An earlier visitor (Mr. Creighton) also gives us a fair knowledge of the boundary of the city. An interesting extract from his pen is quoted below. 'The banks (some of which are faced with bricks) were sufficiently capable of guarding it from floods, during the height of the rivers, when the adjacent country was inundated; as well as a good defence to the place, being mounds of earth from thirty to forty feet in height, and one hundred and thirty to two hundred feet in breadth at the base, with broad ditches on their outside. On the eastern extremity there are two embankments, two hundred feet broad, running parallel to each other, at five hundred and eighty feet asunder; probably for greater security against a large lake in that

quarter, which, in stormy weather, was driven with great force against the bank, during the season of the inundations.'¹⁵ The *Imperial Gazetteer* gives us a description of the fortification of Gauda which sustains our thesis that its development was due almost purely to military considerations. 'Immediately to the south lies the city itself, which towards each suburb and along the Ganges was defended by a strong rampart and a ditch. On the side facing the Mahānandā the rampart was doubled, and in most parts there were two, and in some parts three, immense ditches. These works were designed for embankments against inundation, and were utilized as drains and as fortifications, the double embankment having, apparently, been constructed to prevent the Ganges from cutting away the site of Gaur, when the main body of its water began to gravitate westwards in the early part of the sixteenth century.'¹⁶ 'The west side of the city was throughout washed by the main stream of the Ganges, the eastern side being protected partly by the Mahānandā and partly by a line of perennial swamps, representing a former channel of the Ganges. To the south but little protection was needed, for the junction of the Mahānandā and the Ganges a little lower down would have an invader such a circumscribed base of operations. To the north, which was the most accessible quarter, an artificial bulwark was required; and this was afforded by a line of fortifications about six miles in length, extending in an irregular curve from the old channel of the Bhagirathi at Sonatala to near the Mahānandā at Bhola Hat. This rampart, which was mainly composed of earth, was almost hundred

¹⁴ John Henry Ravenshaw: *Gaur Its Ruins and Inscriptions* p. 2.

¹⁵ H. Creighton: *The Ruins of Gauda* pp. 1-2.

¹⁶ *Imperial Gazetteers*, vol. xii. p. 189.

feet wide at its base. At the north-east part of the curve was a gate protected by a strong projecting outwork in the form of a quadrant, through which a high embanked road passed north and south.¹⁷

'Gauda was excellently provided with a network of metalled roads. The system of drainage was also perfect, considered from the prevalent standard of the time. The sewage of the city used to be dumped into the marshy lands through these drains. The drains intersected the roads over which there were well constructed bridges. A broad-way ran through the city north to south; and there were roads on the tops of embankments running parallel to the main road of the city, terminating at two extremities.'¹⁸

'The streets were broad, straight and lined with trees on both sides thus giving shelter to the passers by. These metalled roads were productive of immense benefit, cultural and economic. They helped transportation of goods and communication of ideas. The city of Gauda practically enjoyed almost all the advantages of a modern town. The water supply of the city was also perfect. There were innumerable tanks and reservoirs both in the main city and in the suburbs. There were also ponds, drains and ditches of various sizes. The Sagardhigi was a famous reservoir, one mile long, and half a mile broad. It was a typical work of irrigation involving great expense and labour.'¹⁹ 'This was one among the public works of Ballal Sen, the noted Hindu king of Bengal.'²⁰ There were also artificial lakes offering recreations to the citizens. *Ain-i-Akbari* refers to two lakes. 'The lake Chhatia-

patia with innumerable islands in its bosom was on the eastern side of the city. Near the lake, there was a fine fort. The third lake Piyasbari lies two miles off from the city. Its water was poisonous meant for applying to criminals condemned to death.'²¹

The description that we have given above is enough to convince the reader that the ancient city of Gauda was provided with almost all the facilities and amenities of a modern city. In addition to the drainage, fortifications, reservoirs, and artificial lakes, there were innumerable ponds, tanks and parks and gardens for recreation. Sir William Hedges in his diary (1681-87) refers to a garden within a mile in the ruins of Gauda where he and his companions enjoyed their rest.²² Sir Walter Hamilton mentions as many as eight market places meant for buying and selling all kinds of commodities needed for civilized life. These markets contained according to this authority as many as three thousand houses.²³ It is quite clear that Gauda was a scene of brisk commercial activities, thanks to its very favourable geographical situation at the confluence of the Ganges and the Mahananda which made it easily accessible to the neighbouring regions through water.

Faria Souza, the Portuguese historian of the sixteenth century refers to the wealth, population, grandeur and the excellence of communication within the city of Gauda. There was a system of roads or broadways covered with trees on both sides. There was huge population in the city amounting to a million and two hundred thousand families.

¹⁷ Abul Fazal Allami: *The Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. ii, tr. by Colonel H. S. Jarrett, p. 122.

¹⁸ H. Creighton: *The Ruins of Gauda*, p. 2.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

²⁰ *Bengal District Gazetteers, Maldah*, p. 14.

²² Sir William Hedges, *The Diary*, p. 88.

²³ Walter Hamilton: *Geographical, Statistical and Historical Description of Hindoostan and the Adjacent Countries*, vol. i, p. 229.

There might be little exaggeration in the description, but we have no doubt that there is a substantial element of truth. The Portuguese historian never visited India : he had to rely on the reports of correspondents who actually visited the city of Gauda. A little extract from him may be quoted. 'The principal city Gouro seated on the banks of Ganges, three Leagues in length, containing one

million and two hundred thousand families, and well fortified; along the streets, which are wide and straight, rows of trees to shade the people, which sometimes is in such numbers that some are trod to death.'²¹

To be continued.

²¹ Manuel de Faria Souza: *The Portuguese Asia*, vol. i. tr. by Captain John Stevens, pp. 416-417.

NAG MAHASHOY—THE PARAGON OF DEVOTEES

BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

(Concluded from the previous issue)

Nag Mahashoy could no longer attend to his duties. Seeing this his employers freed him from all work and arranged that he could get an allowance, so that the family of such a noble soul might not suffer from privation. Sri Ramakrishna was very glad to hear of this news.

Nag Mahashoy now engaged himself in more severe spiritual practices, and began to go to Ramakrishna very often. Formerly he would avoid going to Dakshineswar on Sundays. His idea was: 'Scholars, Pandits and many great men go there on Sundays. Unlettered as I am I shall be a misfit in their company.' So he did not know much of the devotees of Ramakrishna. But as his visits were now very frequent, he came to know some of them. In one such visit Ramakrishna introduced him to Girish Chandra Ghosh, and they were fast friends all their life.

Nag Mahashoy was very particular about the control of the palate. He would not use salt or sugar in his food, in order to restrain the desire for good dishes. Once he lived for two or three days only on bran. He could not continue it, only

because his neighbour made it impossible for him to get the supply. But Nag Mahashoy would say, 'I did not find the least difficulty in living on bran. If the mind remains always busy on the thought about the quality of food, how shall I remember God?'

A large number of beggars would come to Nag Mahashoy's house every day for alms, and poor though he was none would go from him empty-handed. Once a begging friar came to Nag Mahashoy, when he had only a little quantity of rice, just sufficient for his next meal. Nag Mahashoy gave that to him with great devotion and himself remained without food.

Nag Mahashoy could not stand worldly talks. If anybody introduced such subjects before him, skillfully he would stop that. If he would get angry or annoyed with any one, he would mercilessly beat his own body with whatever could be found near at hand as self-punishment. He would not indulge in criticizing others, nor would he contradict any one. Once unwillingly he said something in opposition to a man. As soon as he was conscious of this, he took a piece of stone

and struck his head with that so severely that there was profuse bleeding. It took about a month for the wound to cure. Nag Mahashoy would say, 'Right punishment, so wicked as my mind became.'

To kill his passions he would sometimes take to long fasts. Because of his headache, on medical advice, he gave up bath for the last twenty years of his life. Over and above that his severe austerities gave him a very rugged appearance. Girish would opine, 'Nag Mahashoy knocked his egotism so severely on the head, that it could not rise again.' While going his way, Nag Mahashoy could not be ahead of another—for that meant self-importance. Even if he met a beggar, he would stand behind that person. Nobody would be allowed to prepare tobacco for him, but he would do that for one and all, and found delight in doing that.

During the last days of Ramakrishna when he was laid up in bed, Nag Mahashoy would rarely go to him. He would say, 'I cannot remember the sight of sufferings, much less I can see that.' Once Ramakrishna was suffering from a burning sensation. Nag Mahashoy was near by. Ramakrishna asked him to come nearer, so that by touching his body, his pain might vanish. When Nag Mahashoy did that, Ramakrishna remained long embracing him.

About a week before his passing away, Ramakrishna, in the presence of Nag Mahashoy, expressed a desire to taste Amlaki fruit. But that was not the season for that fruit. Everybody thought, Amlaki was out of the question at that time. But Nag Mahashoy began cogitating, 'When Sri Ramakrishna has said that, the fruit must be found somewhere.' With this thought Nag Mahashoy was out. He could not be seen for two days. He was going from

garden to garden in search of Amlaki. On the third day Nag Mahashoy came with a piece of Amlaki in hand.

Once Nag Mahashoy went to Ramakrishna during his illness. It was an Ekadashi day—the fasting day for Nag Mahashoy. A disciple requested Nag Mahashoy to take something, not knowing his practice. Nag Mahashoy could break the practice, only if the food was made holy by the touch of Ramakrishna. Ramakrishna understood this and did that. While sitting for his meal, Nag Mahashoy ate the whole of the food given to him and then began to eat the leaf itself. Well, it was sacramental food, was it not touched by Ramakrishna! Henceforth when sacramental food was given to Nag Mahashoy, the devotees of Ramakrishna took precaution that he did not repeat the incident.

When Ramakrishna passed away, Nag Mahashoy gave up food, and remained confined in his bed. He would not stir out. The news reached Swami Vivekananda, the refuge of all devotees of Ramakrishna. Swami Vivekananda with two of his brother disciples went to Nag Mahashoy. It was only with difficulty that Swami Vivekananda could persuade him to take food. 'The body should not be given food, with which God has not been realized,' that was the idea of Nag Mahashoy.

After the passing of Ramakrishna Nag Mahashoy went to his village home, even against the wishes of his best friends. For, did not Ramakrishna ask him to remain at home! His words could not be infringed even slightly!

The rest of his life was spent at Deobhog, with occasional visits to Calcutta. There he lived his unostentatious life, hiding his blazing spirituality under a cover of great humility. But as fire cannot be hidden, so is spirituality. Soon the name of Nag Mahashoy spread far and wide. People began to flock to Deo-

bhog, but Nag Mahashoy was as humble as ever. So complete and withal so natural was his self-effacement! This phenomenon itself was a wonderful thing. Swami Vivekananda used to say that the whole of East Bengal was blessed because of the birth of Nag Mahashoy.

Outwardly Nag Mahashoy was just like an ordinary man. From appearance nobody could guess that he was such a great saint. Only those who knew him intimately or watched his conduct would be astonished at his greatness. His life is full of many wonderful episodes, each as astonishing as others.

Once a devotee came to the house of Nag Mahashoy late at night. There was no fuel in the house. Nag Mahashoy cut the ridge-pole of his room to make that into fuel for cooking.

Whoever would go to his house was received as God in the form of a human being come to bless him. Nag Mahashoy suffered from colic pain. At times the pain would be very very severe. Once while he was attacked with such pain, some eight or ten persons came. How to feed them? There was not sufficient rice in the house. Nag Mahashoy went to the market, bought some rice and was carrying that home on his head—Nag Mahashoy would never take the services of servants: but on the way the pain increased. He fell down and could no more walk. The pain was nothing to him; his only thought was, guests were at home, their meals would not be ready in time. When the pain lessened a bit, he started again and reaching home begged pardon of the guests.

Once some guests came at night. It was the rainy season. All the rooms were leaking except one which was Nag Mahashoy's bedroom. That was given to the guests, and Nag Mahashoy with

his wife passed the whole night in prayer and meditation sitting on the porch. Nag Mahashoy considered the day to be very blessed, as he was privileged to serve God in the guests.

And how glad he would be if any disciple or devotee of Ramakrishna visited his house. Once Swami Turiyananda along with another monk came to Nag Mahashoy's house in a boat. Nag Mahashoy was so overpowered with joy that he became unconscious.

In this respect he would make no distinction between the old and the young. Once two young monks from the Belur Math went to Deobhog to pay respects to Nag Mahashoy. But Nag Mahashoy was so respectful to them that he became a terror to the young monks. His services to them took the form of worship, as it were. They were eager to escape from such an embarrassing position as early as possible. In spite of his earnest requests to continue the stay, they bade him good-bye. Nag Mahashoy accompanied them as far as the railway station. The train was crowded. The monks tried to elbow their way into one compartment, but the occupants held them back. Seeing that the monks were treated disrespectfully, Nag Mahashoy began to cry in agony and beat his forehead: were not the sufferings of the monks due to the ill luck of Nag Mahashoy! At the sight of the painful condition of Nag Mahashoy, the fellow passengers made enough room for the monks, and Nag Mahashoy was at peace.

Nag Mahashoy was ever ready to serve all, but would not allow anybody to serve him. He lived in thatched cottages that required annual repair. But that could not be done in the presence of Nag Mahashoy as services of others would not be tolerated. His wife would get the house repaired when he would be away. Once the

house was badly in need of repair. The wife of Nag Mahashoy engaged a servant. He climbed the roof for his work. Nag Mahashoy saw this and humbly requested him to cease from doing that. The servant would hear no nay. It was a privilege for him to repair a house which sheltered a saint. At this Nag Mahashoy began to beat his own forehead in great agony. What, for the happiness of this body, another should undergo labour! The servant saw the mental sufferings of Nag Mahashoy and came down. Oh, the joy of Nag Mahashoy when the servant ceased from work! He began to fan him, and prepared tobacco for him. While going in a boat he would not allow the servants to oar. He would himself do that. For that reason no one liked to go with him in the same boat.

Nag Mahashoy was, as it were, humbler than dust. But he was fierce like anything if anybody criticized his Guru or the children of his Guru in his presence. In this respect he was no respecter of personalities. A saint of the neighbourhood, who unguardedly passed some uncharitable remarks against Ramakrishna, while Nag Mahashoy visited him, got sharp reproof from Nag Mahashoy. A rich man of the locality who commanded great respect was humbled down by Nag Mahashoy, because he committed a similar offence. Once while Nag Mahashoy was coming to Belur Math in a boat, a fellow passenger criticized the activities of the monastery. At this Nag Mahashoy got so infuriated that he struck terror into the heart of the culprit, who got down from the boat immediately.

It was a sight for the gods to see when Nag Mahashoy would go to any place associated with Ramakrishna or if he met any devotee or disciple of Rama-

krishna. When he would meet the Holy Mother he would lose, as it were, all outward consciousness. Long before he would actually meet her he would be in another plane. He would behave like a man from whom the outer world was vanishing—and he would only utter the words—‘Mother, Mother.’ Once coming to the house where the Holy Mother lived, he began to touch the threshold with his head in reverence so vehemently that his head began to bleed.

Once he went to Dakshineswar, but on coming near the room where Ramakrishna lived, his agony was so great because he could no longer expect to see him there, that he fell to the ground and began to roll on the earth. When he would go to the monastery at Alambazar or Belur Math, he would thrill with emotion; on his coming the whole atmosphere would at once change. The bystanders would be, as it were, transported to a different region. Beginning with Swami Vivekananda all monks would hold him in great reverence. Whenever he would visit the monastery all work would be stopped. Everybody would flock to him to enjoy his holy presence. Once he came to Belur Math to see Swami Vivekananda who had just returned from America. How great was his joy to see the Swami who had been the bearer of the message of Ramakrishna to the world! Swami Vivekananda asked him to stay in the monastery. But he would not do that even for a single night. Had not Ramakrishna directed him to live in the world?

Nag Mahashoy had love not only for all human beings, but it extended to all lower creatures and even the vegetable kingdom. It would be difficult to persuade him to get on a carriage drawn by horse, because the horse suffered thereby. Once a fisherman

brought some living fish for sale. They were jumping in fear. Nag Mahashoy bought all the fish and set them free in the neighbouring pond. Seeing this, the fisherman fled from his presence in wonder. One day a cobra was seen in his courtyard. Nag Mahashoy would not allow it to be killed. He would say that it is not the snake of the jungle, but the snake within one's own mind that injures a man. Sometimes he would feel pain, even if leaves were struck off from the tree in his presence.

He would see the Divine Will in everything—good or bad. He suffered from continued colic pain. He thought the disease was a godsend, because it forced him to think of God. Once while he was asleep a cat scratched one of his eyeballs. Others were aghast at the sight. But he was calm and quiet. It was nothing to him. Why should one be anxious so much for bodily happiness? Once he had pains on both his hands which compelled him to keep them together. He thought it was a device by God to keep him in a posture of humility.

After the passing away of Ramakrishna, when Nag Mahashoy came to his village home, he thought of living alone in a cottage in a solitary place. Knowing his intention, his wife gave him perfect freedom to live as he liked but requested him not to be away. Being thus assured by his pious wife, he lived like a monk though in the world. His wife would say with regard to him, 'With the name of the Lord on his lips he knocked all animal propensities on the head. He lived amidst fire, but was not scorched by it.'

Nag Mahashoy once remarked that even birds and beasts were to him the manifestation of the Divine Mother. No wonder all carnality was gone for him.

Once a man belonging to the family of his preceptor, under instruction of Dindayal, requested Nag Mahashoy to seek for the perpetuation of his lineage. The very idea was so shocking to him that he fell to the ground like one in a swoon. 'Such improper request from you?'—with these words he began to strike his forehead with a piece of stone. He began to bleed. The man felt repentant and withdrew his request. Nag Mahashoy was calm, and bowed down before him.

'Sex and gold are the two obstacles to spiritual progress'—these were the words of Ramakrishna. The great disciple of the Master completely rooted out the desire for them.

While living at Deobhog, a relation of the previous employer of Nag Mahashoy was ill of smallpox. Nag Mahashoy had given up the medical practice. But under great pressure he had to suggest a medicine, which cured the patient. And when the party earnestly requested Nag Mahashoy to accept a sum of money as a reward, Nag Mahashoy began to cry in agony to be saved from the temptation. The party thought, 'Here was a God on earth.' Many such incidents can be cited.

Nag Mahashoy hated to play the role of a teacher. But many lives were changed as a result of his influence. His house was a place of pilgrimage to many. Innumerable were the persons who flocked to him. But Nag Mahashoy was humility itself. He thought it a privilege to serve all who came to him. So much was his attention to the physical comforts of the visitors, that they all thought they had come as if to a house of their intimate relation. Amongst his devotees would be counted even a Mohammedan, who looked upon him as a *Pir*. Like his Master Nag Mahashoy was very catholic in his views. He had equal veneration for

the devotees of all sects. He made no distinction between a Hindu, a Moham-medan or a Christian. He bowed down before a mosque, and uttered the name of Jesus when passing by a Church.

His religious view was that every-thing depends on the grace of God. But man has to pray. If any one prays earnestly, and if he has no earthly desire, God's grace is sure to come.

During his last illness he suffered much physically. But not a word of complaint from him. His faith in the goodness of God was as strong as ever. There was physical ailment. But his

mind was fixed on God—calm and serene at the approach of Eternal Life.

The physical existence of this saintly life ended in December, 1899. But the name of Nag Mahashoy is more than a memory. It is a force—it is a source of inspiration, it gives hope and courage to many to aspire after a better life. The wonderful episodes of his life pass from mouth to mouth, and those who hear them feel as if they have the glimpse of a wonder-land, for such things are hardly possible in the world of ours.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

A UNITED STATES OF THE WHOLE WORLD

It is gratifying to note that the utterances made by Indian scholars and statesmen on the pressing problems of the day are marked by tolerance, understanding, and goodwill. Sjt. Hirendra Nath Datta in his fifth Kamala lecture visualized and gave expression to the ideal of a united world. In the concluding part of his address he said that the political ideal, consonant with Indian culture, was not isolation but integration, not nationalism but cosmopolitanism, not separate sovereignty but co-operative collectivism.

YOUTH AND AGE

Grow old along with me !

The best is yet to be,

The last of life, for which the first
was made :

Our times are in His hand

Who saith 'A whole I planned,

Youth shows but half; trust God:
see all nor be afraid !'

The following extracts from a sermon

of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore amplifies the thought contained in the above lines quoted from the English poet Robert Browning.

'In youth's abundant strength, old age appeared to me as deprivation, that is to say, such a condition meant gradual loss of power precluding death. But now I can realize the positive aspect of age. The outer shell of being, which is ego, ceases to engage my eager interest. It is like the fruit which loses its attachment to the outer covering now grown less necessary; completeness lies in its inner core. Youth's immaturity cannot imagine the fulfilment of the core, and therefore has no faith in ripeness. Our energies, in young age, are mainly directed outside, any hurt inflicted causes extreme misery. Not so in old age. Realization through inner maturity proceeds with supreme assurance, external loss or insult fails to make us miserable. But this inwardness must not be regarded as the possession of age alone; in fact, it is because in youth we are apt to give excessive value to external things that we suffer and widen the sphere of unreal

suffering in society. For it is in our external aspect that we are separated from each other and each confined within a narrow reality.

'When spiritual truth is pervasive in our inner being and its influence reigns, we have peace, we are at peace with all things. In this quest of inward calm, leading to harmony of relationship with all age should not count.

'Confused attachments hamper youth from attaining such realization that these can be transcended and the spirit released for right relationship. Then there is peace in humanity and no more fear; death itself is transcended.'

NEED FOR SPIRITUAL REVIVAL

We are indebted to the *Hindu* for the following extract from the report of an address delivered by Sir S. Radhakrishnan.

Presiding over the public meeting held in connection with the Union Christian College Day at Alwaye Sir S. Radhakrishnan pleaded for a religious revival based on truth and devoted to the practice of love.

Sir S. Radhakrishnan recalled his association with the College and the partial realization of its dreams. He was gratified to note that in the Alwaye College there was insistence on the moulding influences of religion. 'Religion' he added 'does not mean the acceptance of a particular cult or creed, but is an inward life of spirit which manifests itself in social service and sacrifice. Orthodox religions to-day, which require us to accept incredible dogmas and unjust social institutions, are spent forces.'

'These are days,' Sir Sarvapalle continued 'when a great wave of secularism and materialism is sweeping over the world. Powerful nations professing to follow various organized religions are at war with each other. Civilizations built up on the basis of these established religions are in danger of perishing. If this dire calamity were to come to pass, it will not be because of the earth giving out in lethal quantities hydrogen gas or of the cooling of the sun or of

the collision of stars, as H. G. Wells and other imaginative writers would have us believe, but wholly because of man's inhumanity to man.'

Greed, individual and collective, with the resultant attitude of fear and hatred, was enshrined in human nature, the speaker said, and these evil passions did not appear to be bad simply because they wore a national dress. This war would be a sheer disaster to humanity if it did not bring about a reorganizing of humanity on the principles of justice and freedom. The essence of a really vital and universal spiritual outlook transcending distinctions between the Jew and the Gentile, the civilized and the barbarian, was the subordination of interests to religion. 'If to defend our interests, our Empire, our culture and even our civilization, we have to use irreligious, immoral and violent means,' proceeded Sir Radhakrishnan, 'vital religion demands that we sacrifice these, rather than use such means. After all, what are these things before the Life Eternal? The world has become one body and is in search of its soul. No dogmatic religion can give the spiritual basis for this growing world-consciousness.'

Concluding, Sir Sarvapalle said that the College which had put things of the spirit higher than all other values had a great contribution to make towards the evolution and realization of true Christian values.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECT OF CULTURE

In his presidential address at the sixteenth annual session of the Indian Philosophical Congress, Prof. N. N. Sen Gupta of Lucknow University is reported to have observed as follows: 'The culture of a people, in its psychological aspect, consists largely of the finer filiation of attitudes, dispositions and modes of thinking. A person belonging to a higher social culture enjoys a much larger range of nuances of these subjective processes, so that subtle alterations in the patterns and course of things come to him laden with many meanings. And such a plane of variegated subjective experience raises life from the level of

"all or no response" to one of discriminative reaction and enjoyment.

'Growth of art, literature and the higher modes of religion is associated with the development of the dimensional functions in the individual, nation and the race. People must live by bread and must fasten a firm grip on the world of things. At the same time, the social and the cultural must be permitted to operate on the mind. They alone may stimulate mental life into evolutionary excursions in the domains that are not bound to the material plane. Civilization and its progress represent a nice balance between these two divergent lines of evolution, whatever disturbs this balance impedes the course of culture and civilization and throws a barrier along the path of mind's normal evolution.

'Force and aggression, physical and ideological domination, reduction of people to conditions of grief and stupefaction, penury and privation, compel the mind to regress to its primal modes of adjustment, to functions that are dominated by the instinctive-emotional processes. When people are out to exploit others in order that they themselves may have a place under the sun, when they impose their will upon others by reason of their animal prowess, they force life and mind to their low level functions.'

NEW SOCIAL ORDER

The Archbishop of York has put forward a vigorously-worded plea calling upon the members of the Church of England to identify themselves more closely with social and economic reform. 'On the subject of the rights of property, the document states that all citizens should be enabled to hold such property as contributes to moral independence and spiritual freedom without impairing that of others, but where such rights

conflict with general social welfare they should be overridden, modified or abolished. On the purpose of production, the document states that the existing industrial order tends to recklessness and sacrilege in the treatment of natural resources and that it has led to the impoverishment of the agricultural community and is largely responsible for the problem of the so-called mass man who is conscious of no spiritual or social status and is a mere item in the machinery of production.'

In the post-war reconstruction of human society, religious leaders should play an active role, if religion is to survive as a potent factor in the lives of nations. The message of the founders of religions should be read anew and applied to altered circumstances. The recognition of the interdependence of the various aspects of life should lead religious thinkers to view religion as the great harmonizing factor that will resolve class prejudices, racial conflicts and economic disparities. The problems are extremely complex. It is not possible for human society to set aside its achievements in science as applied to mass production and facilities of transport. The gains have to be conserved. Complete state control of factories will not by itself restore to the worker the spiritual or social status which he has lost under the existing industrial order. During the hours the worker is engaged in the factory, he is the slave of the machine; no amount of sentimental theorizing will alter the fact. But legislation can be introduced to cut the working hours down to a minimum and the worker can be provided with facilities for self-development which may include reading and discussion, music and art, creative work of all descriptions, social service etc. Man has his bodily needs and also his spiritual needs. If he is forced to give all his time to the labour

necessary for obtaining the means of livelihood, he is certain to be starved spiritually. The factory girl Pippa in Robert Browning's *Pippa passes* had only a single day in the year to call her own. The worker should have compulsory holidays if humanizing influences are to be brought to bear upon his life. A day apparently wasted in a drunken brawl has definitely more human value than a day spent in the ceaselessly repeated mechanical labour of a single item of work such as sharpening the points of thousands of pins. In the interest of society as a whole some wage-slave has to do it; but let it be so arranged that the wage-slave gives not more than half his available time to the soul-killing

occupation and devotes the other half as a free man to soul-elevating pursuits. The one needs as much organization as the other. The Church may give the guidance for the organization of all soul-elevating pursuits which will also include recreations, games and physical exercise.

In the name of efficiency of production, why is the worker forced to devote almost all his available time to factory work? This question leads one to various other problems such as keen competition among the producing nations to capture the world's markets, their desire to exploit the weaker races and so on. No solution can be complete unless it takes a comprehensive world-view and deals out justice to all.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SRI AUROBINDO AND THE NEW AGE. BY ANILBARAN ROY. *Published by Messrs. John M. Watkins, 21, Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, W. C. 2. Available at Sri Aurobindo Library, 16, Sombudoss Street, G. T., Madras and at the Gita Prachar Karyalaya, 108/11, Manohar Pooker Road, Kalighat, Calcutta. Pp. 170. Price Rs. 14 As.*

The book is divided into eight chapters bearing the headings: The Ideal of Sri Aurobindo, Sri Aurobindo and the Future of Mankind, Modern Science and Spirituality, The Riddle of the World, Bases of Yoga, The Divine Mother as revealed to Sri Aurobindo, Sri Aurobindo and Modern English Poetry, and The Life Divine. In the opening chapter the writer discusses how throughout the ages Asian thought with its insistence upon man's spiritual experience has influenced European thought which lays emphasis upon man's mental and vital activities. Then he proceeds to show how Sri Aurobindo has worked out a synthesis of the thought-currents of Asia and Europe. The next chapter professes to fill up certain gaps in Prof. Adharchandra Das's book *Sri Aurobindo and the Future of Mankind*. Sri Aurobindo's views of evolution and the

Superman are also given. The rest of the book serves as an introduction to the published works of Sri Aurobindo. The author's lucidity of expression and grasp of the fundamental principles underlying Sri Aurobindo's thought make the book very valuable to the general reader.

SRI AUROBINDO: SOME VIEWS ON THE INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM. BY ANILBARAN ROY. *Published by Sri Aurobindo Library, 16, Sombudoss St., G. T., Madras. Pp. 20. Price 2 As.*

Sri Aurobindo believes in a higher spiritual force as the one necessary thing for all true action. This theme is developed in the essay. The pamphlet also contains another article which commends some of Sri Aurobindo's books for inclusion in the philosophy course of Indian universities.

THE RIGHT DIRECTION OF REAL PROGRESS. TRANSLATED BY CHUNTIAL V. MODY. *Published by the same, The Bombay Shroffs' (Indigenous Bankers') Association, 233, Shroff Bazar, Bombay 2. Pp. 136. Price Rs. 2-8 As.*

Herein are collected together six illuminating sermons delivered in Gujarati by Acharyadev Srimad Vijayaramchandrasurishvarji of the Jaina Svetambar Murtipujak

fold. The sermons are entitled 'Know the Self,' 'The Great Purpose of Human Life,' 'Purification of the Soul,' 'The Means of Happiness,' 'The Way to Peace,' and 'Whither Progress?' As the title of the book indicates, the teachings contained in these sermons help one to proceed along the correct path to 'real progress,' and thus attain the goal of human life. The mad pursuit after material wealth and prosperity does not lead to perfect happiness. Ridicule of religion and neglect of the spirit are not the signs of progress. The great need to-day is to make man understand that he has to become divine by realizing the divine and that the purpose of life is Self-realization. These sermons aim at fulfilling this need by placing before the reader a course of highly practical instructions for guidance in life. The translation is simple, lucid and as faithful to the original as possible.

THE TRUTH ABOUT GANDHI. By M. D. JAPHETI. *Published by the same, 164, Hornby Road, Fort, Bombay. Pp. 87. Price not mentioned.*

The author writes in the preface: 'In the preparation of this little work I have been actuated by one motive and guided by one purpose—to rescue the subject of Gandhi and Gandhism from beneath the debris of conflicting thoughts and theories and to analyse it in the light of truth.' It is not an easy task that the author has chosen for himself. And how far he has succeeded in his purpose it is difficult to say, for as he himself puts it, 'the subject of Gandhi and Gandhism is admittedly of a very controversial nature.' But this does not take away from the worth of the book and the author's attempt is commendable. These pages contain an intelligent study of the message and significance of Mahatma Gandhi's life which are of considerable importance to India to-day. The author discusses at length the subject of non-violent non-co-operation and answers some of the criticisms levelled against it. He advances his own arguments in support of Gandhian methods and substantiates his conclusions by lengthy quotations from the speeches and writings of Mahatma Gandhi.

MUSINGS OF BASAVA. A FREE RENDERING BY S. S. BASAWANAL, M.A., AND K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR, M.A., D.Litt. *The Basel Mission Press (Canara Ltd.), Mangalore, S. K. Pp. 129. Price Re. 1/-.*

The book under review presents some significant Vachanas of Basava, the great

Virashaiva saint, freely rendered into English from the original Kannada prose. Basava was born in a place called Ingaleswar-Bagewadi, in the Bijapur district of the Bombay Presidency, about the year 1125. From his boyhood he cherished sincere devotion to his tutelary deity, Lord Kudala Sangama, to whom he has addressed these Vachanas, and through whose grace he was initiated into Virashaivism. Refusing to go through the customary ceremony of Upa-nayanam, Basava left his home and began to preach openly his new faith. For a time he held the office of Prime Minister to King Bijjala. Soon Basava became very popular and his new faith gathered strength by getting a large number of adherents. Later on this new movement had to face much opposition and the Virashaivas were subjected to persecution by the State. As the forces of violence raised their head on either side, Basava, finding that his efforts for peace proved fruitless, became disappointed and chose to give up the body and unite with his Lord. A true mystic, an outstanding religious teacher, a social reformer and an able administrator, Basava was a unique personality. In Kannada literature he made his mark by introducing the Vachana Sahitya, a novel form of literary expression.

Basava's teachings have come down to us mostly in the form of these Vachanas. They are the outpourings of his soul on its spiritual pilgrimage. Every Vachana is full of sublime thoughts and is highly elevating and instructive. They fully reveal his mystical experiences. Though it is no easy task to render adequately such subtle thoughts into another language, the translators have taken great pains to preserve the true spirit of the original as far as possible. It is not simply a literal translation of the original. The long introduction to the book is excellently written. It throws light on the life and teachings of Basava, as well as his character and achievements. It also gives an outline of the metaphysical doctrines of Virashaivism and the many social and other reforms it brought about. The readers are introduced to Sister Mahadevi, the Virashaiva woman mystic and a contemporary of Basava. A few of her Vachanas, similarly rendered into English, are given at the end of the book under the title 'Rhapsodies of Sister Mahadevi.' The book is nicely printed and well got-up. *

BENGALI

SRI SRI CHANDI. EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY SWAMI JAGADISWARANANDA. Published by the Udbodhan Office, Baghbazar, Calcutta. Pp. 328+62. Price 14 As.

The Chandi like the Bhagavad-Gita is a widely read scripture in India. Bengal, pre-eminently a home of Shakti worship, has a special liking for the Chandi, many editions of which have seen the light of day and are read daily in innumerable houses. But the volume under review will undoubtedly be found superior to all the existing versions in more respects than one. The word-for-word Bengali rendering of the text will prove of invaluable help to all readers who are not well versed in Sanskrit. The running Bengali translation is as faithful to the meaning of the original as it is elegant and lucid. The footnotes on difficult portions make their meaning quite clear.

There are many commentaries extant on the Chandi. The translator has followed in his renderings the comparatively ancient and authoritative commentary of Nityajibhatta, which is at once simple and clear. Other commentaries also have been made use of in the footnotes to elucidate difficult portions. The translator has spared no pains to make the book useful both to the learned and the common reader and even the most discriminating critic will admit that his labour has been crowned with success. The bold and neat print of the text has rendered the book very convenient for daily recitations. The get-up, printing and paper are of a high standard of artistic excellence.

SRI SRI MAYER JIBANKATHA. BY SWAMI ARUPANANDA. Published by the Udbodhan Office, Baghbazar, Calcutta. Pp. 42. Price 2 As.

This booklet presents a short outline of the wonderful life of the Holy Mother, the consort of Sri Ramakrishna. It is written by one who attended on her for years together and had the good fortune to move with her very intimately. The real greatness of a life lies more in the small deeds it performs and the reader in the course of his perusal of the book will come across innumerable instances of such greatness in the life of the Holy Mother. Her life is a symbol of what true Indian womanhood means and the sooner it is accepted as such the better for the race.

HINDI

DOHAVALI. TRANSLATED BY HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR. Published by the Gita Press, Gorakhpur. Pp. 201. Price 8 As.

It is needless to say anything in praise of the 'Dohas' of Tulsidas. They have been wielding a great influence on the religious life of the Hindi-knowing public. In the present volume the Dohas have been classified and translated into modern Hindi; as such the book is bound to be very popular.

TAMIL

VALIVUM VANAPPUM (STRENGTH AND BEAUTY). BY S. SUNDARAM OF BANGALORE. Published by the Ananda Vikatan Office, 2/140, Broadway, Madras. Pp. 162. Price Re. 18 As.

This is an excellent manual on physical culture. It is divided into six sections dealing with 1. Easy Exercises, 2. Diet, Clothing, and Personal Cleanliness, 3. Resistance Exercises, 4. Abdominal Exercises, 5. More Difficult Exercises and 6. Exercises with Apparatus. The author is well known in Tamil-land and has devoted several years to the study and practice of the various systems he advocates. The book is written in an easy conversational style and is profusely illustrated.

BUAJANAVALI (A BOOK OF DEVOTIONAL SONGS). Published by Sri Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Mylapore, Madras. Pp. 291. Price 12 As.

We quote from the preface to the book: 'The genesis of this compilation is due to the inspiration of Srimat Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj (First President of the Ramakrishna Mission). After opening the new buildings of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home in Madras in 1921, he inaugurated therein the Ramanama Sankeertanam, the singing of which had always transported him to spiritual ecstasy. At about the same time he made Nama Sankeertanam an integral part of the life in all the institutions of the Math and the Mission. Since that date, several lacs of copies of Ramanama Sankeertanam have been printed through the agency of the Ramakrishna Mission and used throughout India and elsewhere. . . . Later on in 1937, a weekly Bhajana was initiated in commemoration of the Birth Centenary of

Sri Ramakrishna. This Bhajana is being held in the premises of the Centenary Elementary School close to the Home, and the members of the staff and the students of the Home are taking the leading part in it. It has been thought that a fairly comprehensive collection of devotional songs ordinarily used in Bhajanas, including also the Ramanama Sankeertanam, should be made so as to be useful not only to the inmates of the Home and the Centenary Bhajana Party, but also to numerous devotees, Bhajana Mandalis, Ashramas, and educational institutions placing a value on religious training and discipline through such means. With this end in view, the present selection has been made, and it includes the choice productions of master-singers and devotees, representative of the East, West, North and South of India, and naturally representative too of different types and different languages. As the majority of the possible users of the book are likely to be those in Tamilnad, who are mainly conversant with the Tamil language, all the songs have been transliterated in Tamil. To ensure, however, the correct pronunciation and enunciation of

the songs in Sanskrit, Hindi, Marathi, Telugu, Kannada, etc., the whole matter has been printed both in Devanagari and Tamil characters on pages facing each other, the lines running parallel for facility of comparison of texts. We note that the Tamil songs which form the last and sixteenth section of the book have not been transliterated in Devanagari characters. This defect may be rectified in a subsequent edition. The book is neatly printed. Ragas and Talas are indicated and no pains have been spared to make the book attractive in every way.

TOLSTOY'S SHORT STORIES (IN TAMIL). BY M. S. SUBRAMANIAM. *Published by the Author from Sundararajapuram Sannidhi Street, Viravanallur (S. I. R.), Madras Presidency. Pp. 80. Price 6 As.*

The book is written in simple prose and forms suitable reading matter for children. It is not a mere translation, for the book draws original material from Tamil life and gives apt quotations from Tamil poets.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Fiji

It is more than one and a half years since Swami Rudrananda went to Fiji. He has been working all along for the educational and cultural uplift of the Indian community. His activities are manifold, but his main work is connected with the educational activities of the South Indian organization which was responsible for taking him to Fiji.

He is invited all over the island for Bhajan, Puja and temple festivals. Last year during the Navaratri Devi Puja he toured the whole island staying for a night in each district performing Homa and Archana. Huge crowds gathered at each place. The birthdays of great and holy men were also celebrated. He performs regular Bhajan on Friday nights at Nadi itself and on Saturdays he usually goes out to neighbouring or distant villages to conduct Bhajan or Puja.

He also keeps contact with the young men's and ladies' organizations and guides the activities of the Associations. Last summer he arranged for a summer school for adults and he spent a month with the young men numbering about forty and sent them back to the villages more cultured, educated and God-minded. He addresses the ladies in every place now and then and guides their activities.

In the midst of all this work he maintains his home of more than forty children and attends to their wants. Every child receives his attention and like a fond mother he sees that they have good food and proper dress. He also sees to their health and happiness. The home is attached to the central school at Nadi.

He is working day and night for the ideals for which the Mission stands by performing unselfish and loving work for the suffering and the needy.

ENGLAND

We are glad to hear that under the guidance of Swami Avyaktananda the Vedanta Movement in England is able to continue several of its activities in spite of the difficult conditions prevailing.

THE SONARGAON RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, Dacca

The Silver Jubilee Celebration of the Sonargaon Ramakrishna Mission was performed with due éclat from the 8th to the 17th January, 1941. The inaugural ceremony of the Silver Jubilee was held under the presidentship of Swami Sambuddhananda. At the outset a message from Srimat Swami Virajananda, the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, was read, after which speeches were delivered on the aims and activities of the Mission. Swami Satyananda opened the exhibition held in connection with the celebration. A conference of the devotees was held on the second and third days. Swami Hariharananda presided. The Secretary of the Reception Committee dwelt on the objects of the conference, and Prof. P. B. Junnarkar, Chairman of the Reception Committee, wel-

We have received the programme of a Religious Convention arranged to be held from the 8th to the 14th September.

We also note that the present address of the Swami is 5, High Gales Road, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, England.

comed the devotees in a nice speech. Many other speakers also gave speeches appropriate to the occasion.

Essay, speech and recitation competitions were held on the fourth day and a public meeting was organized on the fifth, in which speeches on 'Sri Ramakrishna and the Synthesis of Religions' were delivered. Sports and music competitions formed the programme of the sixth and seventh days. Srimad-Bhagavatam was read and expounded on the two succeeding days. On the tenth day about seven thousand people were fed and the anniversary meeting of the Sonargaon Ramakrishna Mission was held. Many other interesting and instructive items including Jatra performances, physical feats, etc. formed parts of the celebration.

KARACHI

The seventy-eight Birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated on Sunday, the 19th January, 1941, by the Ramakrishna Math, Karachi. In the forenoon there was Bhajan as well as Puja and Homa in the Math shrine. A public meeting was held in the Math premises in the afternoon. Principal S. B. Junnarkar, the first speaker, spoke in English and dwelt on how the great Swami's appearance in a critical period of our history brought in its wake a renaissance in India in all fields of

her life and activity. Prof. Ram Punjwani and Mr. Lokamai Chelaram who followed next spoke respectively in Sindhi and Hindi. Swami Jagadishwarananda, who spoke last, interpreted the national and international significance of the life and message of Swami Vivekananda and exhorted the Hindu youth to follow in the footsteps of the great Swami.

Anniversary meetings were organized also in Hyderabad and Sukkur.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SARADA VIDYALAYA, MADRAS

The report of the Vidyalyaya for the year 1941 shows how effectively the institution has been serving the cause of female education in the Presidency of Madras. The Vidyalyaya consists of a High School for girls, an Elementary School, a Training School chiefly for young destitute widows who are trained there for the profession of teaching, two Hostels for the students of the Schools and another Hostel which is to form the nucleus of a Teachers' Home.

High School: There were 654 students in the High School including the lower classes

at the end of the year. The medium of instruction is Tamil and Telugu in the lower classes and Tamil and English in the High School classes. The study of Sanskrit, and sewing and music are compulsory in the lower Forms. Provision is made for the teaching of mathematics, physics, chemistry, history, physiology and music under the optional group. There is arrangement for physical exercise and games. 15 students were declared eligible out of the 82 who were sent up for the S.S.L.C.

Examination. 7 students were in receipt of government scholarships at the end of the year, besides whom there were 2 others who were receiving private scholarships. Moral and religious instruction is imparted to the students regularly.

Elementary School: The strength of the School at the end of the year was 474. The new syllabus prescribed by the Government is followed.

Training School: The strength of the School including the Model Section was 256 at the end of the year. The unique feature of the School is that it has a preparatory section into which young women with little or no previous schooling are admitted and trained up.

Of the 16 senior students who appeared for the Training School Certificate Examination, 18 passed. 32 candidates appeared for

the Preparatory Examination of whom 27 passed and joined the Junior Training class.

A Montessori class was conducted as a separate unit in which as many as 45 children of three and four years of age joined during the year under report.

The Schools and the Hostels are now scattered and located in different places involving considerable difficulty in supervision and co-ordination of work, and most of the classes are held in temporary sheds and structures. The immediate need of the institution is to bring all the sections together and consolidate the work. A three-storied building to accommodate 39 class rooms and 3 dormitories has been planned. A dormitory will cost Rs. 7,000/- and a room Rs. 3,000/-. The authorities appeal to the philanthropic public to help this worthy cause.

BENARES

The Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Benares, celebrated the birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda on the 26th January, 1941. A public meeting was held in the afternoon within the compound of the Ashrama. Dr. N. N. Godbole, M.Sc., D. Phil (Berlin), of the Hindu University presided. Prof. U. S. Asrani delivered a lecture in English on 'Swami Vivekananda and Practical Vedanta.' Prof. Sri Krishna Joshi speaking in Hindi said that Swamiji came to teach the world the real meaning of kindness, self-control and charity and how these could be effectively carried into practice. Sreeyut Sarojesh Chandra Bhattacharya, Principal, Anglo-Bengali Intermediate College, observed that the proper way of worshipping the memory of the great

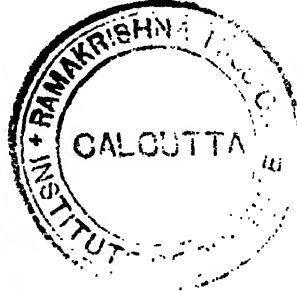
Swami was to build up our life in the light of the message he had left. Prof. Batuk Nath Bhattacharya, who spoke in Bengali, pointed out that the uniqueness of the teachings of Swami Vivekananda lay in the fact that they opened up a new path for attaining the knowledge of the Self by inculcating the worship of the Jiva as the Shiva. The President in his concluding speech narrated the experience he had gathered during his stay in the West and dwelt on the fundamental difference between Indian philosophy and the philosophy of the West. He opined that we would rise again as a great nation if we would follow the teachings of the great Swami.

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

LIFE AFTER DEATH

Sri Ramakrishna (to *Bankim*): ‘Well, you are a great scholar and an author of many books. What is the duty of man and what accompanies him after his death? Is there a next world? What do you say?’

Bankim: ‘A next world! What is that?’

Sri Ramakrishna: ‘Yes, a man who has attained Knowledge does no more undergo any birth after his death, in any region whatsoever. But so long as he is in ignorance and devoid of the Knowledge of God, he is born again and again. There is no escape for him from this chain of births and deaths. Life after death is real for him so long as he is subject to ignorance. But on the dawn of Knowledge and realization of God he becomes liberated and free from the bondage of births and deaths. Paddy does never sprout if it is boiled. A man scorched in the fire of Knowledge, likewise, does no more lend himself to the play of creation. He

becomes immune from worldly life and loses all attachment for lust and gold. Of what avail can boiled seeds of paddy be even if they are sown in the field?’

Bankim (smiling): ‘Sir, weeds also do not serve the purpose of a fruit-bearing plant.’

Sri Ramakrishna: ‘A man of Knowledge cannot be compared to a weed. A man who has attained the vision of God comes to possess a fruit which, unlike the common stuff, bestows on him eternal life and sets him free from the shackles of births and deaths. He is not born again either on this earth or in the regions of the sun and the moon.

‘Comparisons are always one-sided. You are a learned man. Have you not read logic? If a man is described as terrible like a tiger, it does not mean that he is a tiger in every detail, even to the head and the tail. (All laugh).

‘The same thing I said to Keshab Sen also. Keshab asked me, “Sir, is

there a next world?" I did not give a direct reply. I said, "A potter produces earthenwares and puts them in the sun to dry. Now, there may be pots that are still raw, and also those that have been already hardened by fire. Sometimes cows or other animals may happen to pass over them and break a few. The potter rejects the pots that have been baked by fire, but picks up those that are still raw, reduces them to clay again, and produces new wares by putting the clay on the wheel. He does not throw away the broken pieces of the raw pots." Therefore, so long as you are in ignorance and have not attained the vision of God, the Great Potter will subject you again and again to the wheel of creation and you will have no rest from this cycle of births and deaths. You will have to be born again and again. Freedom can be attained only when God is realized. The Great Potter will, then, let you off, because, you no longer serve the purpose of creation which is due to illusion. A man of Knowledge transcends the limits of Maya or illusion. What attraction can he then have for this world of Maya?

'Of course, some of these free souls the Lord retains here to lead people out of the quagmire of this world of illusion. A man of Knowledge takes shelter in Vidya Maya in order that he may teach people the saving truths of religion. Or, really speaking it is the Lord Himself who keeps this veil over him to serve His own purpose. Such was the case with Shukadeva and Shankaracharya.

(To Bankim) 'Well, what is the duty of man? What do you say?'

Bankim (smiling): 'Well, sir, if you ask me I must say that it is to eat, sleep and enjoy the pleasures of a sex life.'

Sri Ramakrishna (with disgust): 'What a shame! How mean-minded you are! You are giving utterance to what you practise day and night. Lust and gold dominate your life and so your tongue also indulges in talks about them. Man loses his sincerity and turns a hypocrite if he indulges too much in worldly thoughts. The thought of God redeems him of all his crookedness. A man blessed with the vision of God will never speak in terms of what you have said.

MERE LEARNING AND LUST AND GOLD

(To Bankim) 'Of what use can mere learning be if one is not devoted to God and is devoid of Viveka and Vairagya? Learning cannot save a man if he is attached to lust and gold.

'Kites and vultures may indeed soar very high, but their eyes are all the while fixed on the charnel-pit where the carcasses of dead animals are lying. A pandit may be well versed in the scriptures, may quote from them at length, and may be an author of many books, but he may, at the same time, lead a lustful life and hug wealth and honour as the be-all and end-all of life. Should he be called a pandit? A pandit who is not devoted to God is not worth the name.

'There are persons who think, "These people always talk of God. They have lost their balance and run insane. But see, how clever we are and how we enjoy the world! Wealth and honour abound in our life and the pleasure of the senses we never deny!" A crow also thinks itself very clever, but right from the morning it is on the lookout for dirt on which it lives. Just notice a crow and you will see what an air of cleverness it puts on! (All are silent).

'But there are people who are devoted to God and pray to Him to liberate them from the shackles of lust and

gold. Sense-pleasures appear bitter to them, and they desire nothing but the nectar of devotion at the feet of the Lord. Their nature is like that of a swan. If milk and water are mixed together and put before the swan, it takes out the milk by leaving the water. And have you marked the movement of a swan? It goes straight. A man of pure devotion also has no other end in view but the realization of God. Nothing more he desires and feels no attraction for anything else. (Softly to Bankim) Hope you won't mind.'

Bankim: 'Well, sir, I have not come only to hear sweet words.'

Sri Ramakrishna (to Bankim): 'The world consists of nothing but lust and gold. This itself is Maya. It does not allow man to think of God. After the birth of one or two children the husband and the wife should live as brother and sister and indulge in no other talk between them but that of God. This will ultimately lead both of them towards God and the wife will turn out to be a helpmate to the husband in his spiritual life. The bliss

of God-realization is impossible of attainment until one kills the brute in him. He should pray to the Lord to relieve him of his animal nature, and do it earnestly. The Lord knows the heart of all and if there is earnestness He is sure to respond to it. There can be no doubt about it.

'There is another obstacle—gold. One day I sat in the Panchavati near the Ganges, repeated severally the words "Money is earth and earth is money," and then threw both of them into water.'

Bankim: 'Money is no better than earth! Sir, we can help a poor man even with a few copper coins. If money is to be looked down upon as earth, should there be then no effort on our part to show mercy and help others?'

Sri Ramakrishna (to Bankim): 'How glibly you talk of mercy and charity! What power have you got to help others? Men are so full of pride but when they sleep they cannot know even if the worst danger happens to them. Where do their pride and egotism vanish then?'

"The person who desires to realize the Self while devoting himself to the nourishment of the body proceeds to cross a river by catching hold of a crocodile mistaking it for a log."

CITIZENSHIP IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The world was never made;
It will change, but it will not fade.
So let the wind range;
For even and morn

Ever will be
Thro' eternity.
Nothing was born;
Nothing will die;
All things will change.

The poet sounds a note of optimism. In the very next poem, however, he gives us a pessimistic view of the fate of our 'old earth.' For he says,

Nine times goes the passing bell;
Ye merry souls farewell.
The old earth
Had a birth,
As all men know,
Long ago.

And the old earth must die,
So let the warm winds range,
And the blue wave beat the shore;

For even and morn
Ye will never see
Thro' eternity.
All things were born.
Ye will come never more
For all things must die.

—Alfred Lord Tennyson

As the poet provides us with two diametrically opposed views, he may not be helpful to us in our search for Beginnings and Endings. Let us turn to the scientists and hear what they have to say on this matter. For the last three centuries, that is, ever since the time Galileo pointed his telescope to the sky and began to make a closer examination of the heavenly bodies, astronomers have done a considerable amount of work in exploring the sky

and giving us precise information concerning the distances of stars and planets, their size, chemical composition, velocity of movement and so on. During the last few decades physicists by their brilliant researches into the structure of the atom have opened up a new universe in which relative magnitudes and relative distances bear close resemblance to relative stellar magnitudes and distances. Thus the macrocosm and the microcosm have in a way been explored and charted. We have precise information, where the ancients had to navigate uncharted seas. Man stands in the middle, for it has been found that his size is a mean between the size of an average star and the size of an atom. The ratio of the size of a star to the size of a man is the same as the ratio of the size of a man to the size of an atom. Much work has also been done on the ultimate composition of matter. The study of the source of the sun's energy has led scientists to the startling fact that in the interior of the sun matter gets annihilated and in ceasing to be matter becomes radiant heat and light. It has been calculated that every minute the sun loses about 250 million tons of matter, which as heat and light and other cosmic rays radiates into space and according to existing scientific views is irrecoverably lost as matter. The same thing happens to the stars, for we all know that the sun is also a star and not a very important one either. The second law of thermodynamics definitely shows that we are inhabitants of a running-down universe which will ultimately cease to be. The end may be millions of years off. As practical men, we may not be much

concerned with what is going to take place in such a distant future but philosophers who seek for ultimate truths have to accept the verdict of science, at any rate provisionally, and see how far the cosmological views propounded by physical science will influence their ideas of man's destiny.

* * *

The speculations of ancient Hindus as recorded in their Puranas hold that time moves in cycles. The arrow of time makes a long flight and comes back to the place from where it started. Creation and preservation are succeeded by destruction, and during the Maha-Pralaya the universe rests in the womb of the Creator and at the dawn of a new creation, a new cycle commences. This introduces the idea of an extra-cosmic Creator, an idea not much in favour with modern science. Let us hear what a leading scientist, Prof. A. S. Eddington has to say regarding the conception of a never-ending cycle of rebirth of matter and worlds. 'At present we can see no way in which an attack on the second law of thermodynamics could possibly succeed, and I confess that personally I have no great desire that it should succeed in averting the final running-down of the universe. I am no Phœnix worshipper. This is a topic on which science is silent, and all that one can say is prejudice. But since prejudice in favour of a never-ending cycle of rebirth of matter and worlds is often vocal, I may perhaps give voice to the opposite prejudice. I would feel more content that the universe should accomplish some great scheme of evolution and, having achieved whatever may be achieved, lapse back into chaotic changelessness, than that its purpose should be banalised by continual repetition. I am an Evolutionist, not a Multiplicationist. It seems rather

stupid to keep doing the same thing over and over again.'

* * *

The great scientist admits a 'purpose' and a 'great scheme of evolution' directed towards the fulfilment of that purpose. These admissions are of value to the philosopher whose quest is for the discovery of permanent values in a changing universe. There is no reason why the philosopher should not accept the verdict of science *in toto*. On the other hand, the scientist need not have any quarrel with the philosopher, if the latter attempts to fill up gaps in the findings of the former. The scientist takes up a ready-made universe and traces cause preceding cause and arrives at the birth of matter, the birth of the great nebulae, the birth of the stars and the planets, the formation of the seas and the mountains on the face of our planet, the coming of life, the evolution of various species of plants and animals and the evolution of man, the crowning glory of creation. All these the scientist does without positing a Creator. He computes in millions of years the time taken by all these processes and directing his eyes forward brings to our view the distant future in which the moon, the satellite of our planet, will approach the earth and finally collide with it; he stirs up our imagination by pointing to us a dying sun, which from being white-hot becomes red-hot and finally ceases to be, very much like the coal in a burnt-up furnace. Long before this event, he tells us that the last human being on earth would have died leaving behind no heir to all our noble heritage of culture and civilization. As science stands at present, the accepted view is that the night that would set in will

¹ Prof. A. S. Eddington: *The Nature of the Physical World* (Gifford Lectures 1927). Chapter IV last para.

know no dawn. Thus according to the scientist, out of the void we came and into the void we return. We fail to see the 'purpose' behind this 'great scheme of evolution.' In speaking of a running-down universe, the scientist compares the universe to a wound-up clock which will keep on functioning for millions and millions of years to come. But as to who wound it up, or how it came to be wound up, the scientist is significantly silent. We have no reason to find fault with the modern scientist. He himself admits that we emerged from our animal ancestry fairly recently and that the time we have so far given to the study of these problems is very very little. Future scientists may have many more valuable findings to communicate to the human race, but that does not in any way decrease the value of the work already done.

* * *

The fact that matter gets annihilated into cosmic radiation and thereby gets dematerialized is of interest to the Vedantist who negates matter. Life such as we know it evolved out of matter, at any rate it is associated with matter. Inorganic matter surrendering itself to the embrace of the vegetable gets incorporated in the body of the vegetable and becomes organic matter. Of the ninety-two elements carbon with its possibility of linkage enters greatly into the formation of organic compounds. Animals cannot directly make use of inorganic matter; vegetable matter by surrendering itself to the animal helps the latter to build its body tissues. Mind, consciousness and spirit are thought of by us so closely associated with, functioning through and expressing themselves by means of bodies, that it is almost impossible for us to conceive them in isolation. The immortality which religion promises is ordinarily conceived as a survival of the

human personality clothed in a body of some kind, probably composed of finer matter, shining and resplendent. God, although He is spoken of as the Pure Spirit by all theologies, enters the human imagination as a person 'having definite feelings, endowed with knowledge, thinking successive thoughts as we do and finally arriving at a decision to be carried into effect.' The inveterate habit of the mind to form images exhibits itself in language and thought as the desire to give some kind of vesture to abstract notions and speak and think in metaphors, similes and personifications. As soon as we hear the word 'courage,' our mind brings into its field of vision the picture of a lion or a strong man, the word 'purity' may usher in a white flower or a saintly personage. The poets confirm our natural propensities and enlarge their scope by giving corporeality to all kinds of abstract notions. As a convenient device for communicating thought images certainly have a place, but do they not vitiate higher thinking and prevent the spirit from breaking the shackles of matter? Higher mathematics has developed by rising above the necessity of using figures and models which are indispensable in the lower branches of the subject. The differential equations and such other symbols which it uses belong to a higher order of entities. Modern relativity physics has made its brilliant discoveries by eschewing models and making use of the symbols of higher mathematics. Why should not religious and philosophical thinking do something similar? The heaven of the dualist is peopled with a host of images. The city of God is conceived in dualistic scriptures as built up of pure gold as transparent as glass and of all manner of precious stones such as jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, beryl, topaz, jacinth

and amethyst. The Supreme Being is thought of as a person seated on a throne surrounded by devotees all clad in fine raiments. Flowers unfading and exquisitely perfumed and the harmonies of sweet music lend enchantment to the charming city,

Where the bright Seraphim in burning
row

Their loud up-lifted Angel trumpets
blow

And the Cherubic host in thousand
choirs

Touch their immortal Harps of golden
wires.

* * *

The thinking man's ideas of cosmogony have undergone a revolutionary change in the course of the three centuries that have elapsed, since the time Milton, the great English poet, wrote his immortal epic. Astronomy has searched the skies and has provided us with a new set of cogent ideas. As poetic imagery Milton's conception of heaven and earth may be considered as valid for all time. But do they approach anywhere near the modern conception of space, time and matter revealed by mathematicians and physicists and the brilliant conception of Reality which transcends space, time and matter and also forms the background of space, time and matter, a conception formulated by Vedantic philosophers who lived in India two thousand years ago? Einstein's theory of relativity with its ideas of a finite, yet boundless universe, of time conceived as mixed up with space forming a space-time continuum, of the warping of space, of matter conceived as a curvature of space, of the interdependence of the units of length, time and mass and of the necessity of our revising the ideas propounded by classical Newtonian mechanics, has withstood the rigorous tests of scientific

thinking and has brought about a revolutionary change in the scientists' conception of the external world. Minkowski's exposition of a four-dimensional world has made scientists to revise their old ideas of time. The philosopher may perhaps find in it the possibility of identifying 'becoming' with 'being.' Max Planck's quantum theory by measuring the value of the constant h , the single quantum of action, has introduced an element of chance into the way in which a particle of matter may act under fixed conditions. This has led to the formulating of the Principle of Indeterminacy and to the recognition of the fact that the laws of Nature divide themselves into three classes: (1) identical laws, (2) statistical laws and (3) transcendental laws. The scientist has worked his way up to the portals of the mystic and admits the possibility of the latter's possessing certain aspects of the knowledge of Reality, at present denied to scientists. Physical science has come to realize its own limitations and looks up to the philosopher and the mystic for a solution of the deeper problems of life and Reality. At the same time, shall we not say that it behoves the philosopher, as the seeker of fundamental truths not to belittle the claims of science but to accept its conclusions within the limitations it has set to itself. It is gratifying to note that the conclusions of modern science are in harmony with the findings of Vedanta philosophy.

* * *

We have already noted that science upholds the ultimate annihilation of matter. It has also propounded theories which hint at the illusory nature of seemingly solid and palpable matter. The immortality of the Spirit remains unshaken; it does not fall within the circumscribed realms of science. Con-

cerning the approach which the mystic makes to the realms of Reality we hope to say something in our next article on 'The Scientist and the Mystic.' Let us proceed to examine the claims made on behalf of physical immortality. Religious legends tell us about the sage Markandeya and others who have been blessed with physical immortality. We admit that there may be more things in heaven and earth than our philosophy dreams of. As far as we know, Vedanta philosophy wherever it speaks of the blessed abode of the Devas, the shining ones, adds that they have a long but limited life and have to be born again as men to enter into Mukti or Nirvana which is a state in which space, time and matter cease to be. In differentiating between the attainment of heaven (Svarga) and the attainment of emancipation (Mukti), Vedanta philosophy upholds the conception of spiritual immortality and casts aside all ideas of physical immortality. If the physical bodies of Sage Markandeya and others were to persist through the Maha-Pralaya of the Puranas or the annihilation of matter of the scientists, they must be composed of something other than matter, at any rate matter as conceived by modern science. If spiritualizing matter means a process in which the inherent attributes of matter get replaced by the attributes of the spirit, then also matter loses its identity. The Siddhas, a class of alchemists of medieval India, claimed to have discovered the elixir that would prolong human life indefinitely. Alchemists of other countries have also made similar claims. We have no evidence to prove the validity of their claims. Some of them might have lived longer than the normal span of life allotted to humanity, but all of them appear to have completed their sojourn on earth and finally departed treading the same path as

their forefathers. Again the question arises, is it desirable to prolong life indefinitely, particularly if physical and mental deterioration sets in even to a small degree? What is the harm in passing through the portals of death with the possibility of being reincarnated in a fresh young body to continue whatever work one may have to do and gather fresh experience? In the case of persons whose religious philosophy holds that a human being has only a single chance of living in this 'best of all possible worlds' there is some justification in desiring a length of life beyond the normal span, as Mr. Bernard Shaw does in his *Back to Methuselah*. Even such persons may not think of a physical immortality.

* * *

The Legend of the Wandering Jew advocates the case for death. Undue attachment to the flesh and the fear of the unknown make the normal human being shrink from the approach of what he or she considers to be an unwelcome visitor. But if philosophy teaches anything it is the insight into Nature's plan, which enables the knower to rise above this unwholesome fear, the fear of death. The Wandering Jew desired death but a curse pronounced on him prevented him from getting it. Shelley, the English poet, has immortalized this legend which was current in Medieval Europe. Some worthy men of those credulous times have even testified to having come face to face with the Wanderer. Ahasuerus (also spelt Ahasverus) was a Jew by birth and a shoemaker by trade. He lived in the time of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Tradition says that when Jesus was wearied with the burden of His ponderous cross and wanted to rest before the door of Ahasuerus, the unfeeling wretch drove Him away with brutality. Jesus uttered no complaint. But an angel of death appeared before

Ahasuerus, and exclaimed indignantly, 'Barbarian! thou hast denied rest to the Son of Man; be it denied thee also, until He comes to judge the world.' Because of the curse Ahasuerus tramped and wandered over the wide world and years afterwards returned to his native town and found it in ruins and full of desolation. He wanted the consolation of death but the curse precluded him from the rest of the peaceful grave. Whenever he attained the age of one hundred years, he fell into a swoon and suddenly recovered finding himself to be thirty years old, just the age which he was at the time the curse was pronounced on him. The mental struggle which the poor Jew had to undergo is best described in his own words: 'Dreadful beyond conception is the judgement that hangs over me. Jerusalem fell I crushed the sucking babe, and precipitated myself into the destructive flames. I cursed the Romans—but, alas, alas! the restless curse held me by the hair;—and I could not die! Rome the giantess fell—I placed myself before the falling statue—she fell and did not crush me. Nations sprang up and disappeared before me; but I remained and did not die. From cloud-encircled cliffs did I precipitate myself into the ocean; but the foaming billows cast me upon the shore, and the burning arrows of existence pierced my cold heart again. I leaped into Etna's flaming abyss, and roared with the giants for ten long months, polluting with my groans the Mount's sulphurous mouth—ah! ten long months. The volcano fermented, and in a fiery stream of lava cast me up. I lay torn by the torture snakes of hell amid the glowing ciaders, and yet continued to exist. A forest was on fire; I darted on wings of fury and despair into the crackling wood. Fire dropped upon me from the trees, but the flames only singed

my limbs; alas! it could not consume them. I now mixed with the butchers of mankind, and plunged into the tempest of raging battle. I roared defiance to the infuriated Gaul, defiance to the victorious German; but arrows and spears rebounded in shivers from my body. The Saracen's flaming sword broke upon my skull; balls in vain hissed upon me; the lightnings of battle glared harmless around my loins; in vain did the elephant trample on me, in vain the iron hoof of the wrathful steed! The mine, big with destructive power, burst upon me, and hurled high in the air I fell on heaps of smoking limbs, but was only singed. The giant's steel club rebounded from my body, the executioner's hand could not strangle me, the tiger's tooth could not pierce me, nor would the hungry lion in the circus devour me. I cohabited with poisonous snakes, and pinched the red crest of the dragon. The serpent stung, but could not destroy me. The dragon tormented, but dared not devour me. I now provoked the fury of tyrants; I said to Nero, "Thou art a bloodhound!" I said to Christiern, "Thou art a bloodhound!" I said to Muley Ismail, "Thou art a bloodhound!" The tyrants invented cruel torments, but did not kill me. Ha! not to be able to die—not to be able to die—not to be permitted to rest after the toils of life—to be doomed to be imprisoned for ever in the clay-formed dungeon—to be for ever clogged with this worthless body, its load of diseases and infirmities—to be condemned to behold for millenniums that yawning monster Sameness, and Time, that hungry hyena, ever bearing children, and ever devouring again her offspring!—Ha! not to be permitted to die! Awful Avenger in Heaven, hast Thou in Thine armoury or wrath a punishment more dreadful? Then let it thunder upon me, command

a hurricane to sweep me down to the foot of Carmel, that I there may lie extended; may pant, and writhe, and die !"²

* * *

Even men who live more than the normal span of life are afflicted by the bereavement consequent upon the passing away of near and dear ones. Methusalehs will have to hear the pain of parting from generations and generations of friends. It is, of course, a different thing if by some decree Providence decides to lengthen the span of life of the whole human race. Until such a time comes one would surely prefer to tread the path of one's forefathers and be gathered unto their bosoms when Death the leveller takes hold of him. Living in the realms of heaven with resplendent bodies may give a span of life probably three hundred and sixty-five times as long as the present life for the scriptures say that the human year is but a day to the gods on high but even such a life holds forth no permanency. What then is the eternal life, the true citizenship in the Kingdom of God? Long familiarity with our planet has bred in our hearts a certain amount of contempt for it. We have forgotten that our earth is also one among the many heavenly bodies. If we could transport ourselves to the Morning Star we may see our earth as a brilliant star in the blue vault of heaven. There is no reason why eternal bliss and the Kingdom of God should not begin for us even while we are sojourn-

ing on this planet, the home of all our joys and sorrows. Our scriptures bear testimony to the Jivan-Muktas, the released souls who although they were in the body were not of it. They had established full communion with the All. A limited body howsoever fine and resplendent it might be could not contain the soul that had pervaded All having become one with the All. When Shukadeva was addressed by name, mountains and rivers, the wide ocean and the raging winds responded to the call, for Shukadeva had become the All. The sacred scriptures give us glimpses of the life eternal, which appears to be not a mere lengthening out of the span of life but a change in the quality of life. If time is only a relative entity, as it is claimed to be by modern science, a moment can become a millennium and a thousand years shrink to a single moment. The human being already experiences three distinct conceptions of time in his waking, dreaming and deep sleep states. Is not the blessed state of the released souls something that transcends time? Einstein tells us that the velocity of light which is a finite quantity is bound up with time and if a conscious being were to move with the speed of light time would stand still for that being. Matter that gets annihilated and time that ceases to be cannot assure a persisting material vesture for an immortal spirit. He who lives, moves and has his being in God has gone above mortality, and immortality seems to be the verdict of the sacred scriptures.

MAYAVATI,

17th March, 1941.

² A. S. Rappoport, Ph.D.: *Medieval Legends of Christ*, Ivor Nicholson and Watson Ltd., London 1934.

ETHICS AND RELIGION*

By SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

True ethics and religion are inseparable, though distinct. It may be worth while to recall at the outset two chief uses of the term ethics. As generally used ethics is synonymous with morality. But a nice distinction is sometimes made between these two words; ethics, then, connoting more particularly the social phase, which is not so evident in the word morality. The truth, of course, is that morality likewise embraces the social features. Exact writers reserve the term ethics to denote the attempt at systematizing the moral data. We shall use the word mainly in the first sense, i.e. as a synonym of morality.

Religion, properly conceived, is synonymous with spirituality. It is therefore evident that the relation between ethics and religion is but that of morality to spirituality.

One can be moral without being spiritual, but one cannot be spiritual without being moral. Moral life is preparatory to spiritual life. Moral virtues are the *sine qua non* of spiritual enlightenment.¹

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¹ 'He who has not turned away from bad conduct, whose senses are not under control, whose mind is not collected and pacified, cannot attain the Self by supreme knowledge,' declares the Katha Upanishad (II. 24). In Vedantic culture Shama and Dama (control of the internal and the external senses) are the first two of the six assets of a spiritual aspirant. Of the eight steps of Yoga, Yama and Niyama constitute the first two. (Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali II. 29.)

In the Bhagavad-Gita, Sri Krishna mentions twenty different virtues, such as

Though moral life is possible without spiritual knowledge, yet morality reaches its culmination in the transcendental spiritual experience. Morality ends in spirituality, spirituality begins in morality. These are the two stages of development or the two allied expressions of the same life. To illustrate, let us take the flower and the bud. There can be buds without flowers but there cannot be flowers without buds. The flower is the developed form of the bud, the bud is its potential form. In moral rules spiritual truth is always involved. The rationale of morality is in the spiritual oneness of all.

But this is a truth very often ignored in modern times, when organized efforts are made to divorce ethics from religion and the moral life of man is planned independently of the religious ideal. The reasons behind such movements, so far as we can see, are mainly these:

Morality free from religious bias may have a universal appeal and serve the cause of human amity and advancement much better than religion; moral principles are, generally speaking, common to different religions, in spite of hopeless contradictions of doctrines and practices. Supporters of morality are to be found among such also as stay outside the pale of religion.

humility, unpretentiousness, innocence, patience, uprightness, and so on, as conducive to self-knowledge (XIII. 7-11). In fact, the ancient scriptures of India are replete with statements glorifying the ethical qualities in the life of the aspirant as well as the adept.

Morality appeals to man's common sense. It is concerned with human interests. It deals with this tangible world of ours. To be moral one has not to bother about such dubious entities as God, soul, heaven, hell, and so on.

Religion, on the other hand, it is contended, turns the focus of the mind from the seen to the unseen, from the real to the imaginary, from the immediate concerns of life to an uncertain future. It makes men otherworldly. It is life-negating.

Under the religious impulse man has a tendency to forget his surroundings, turn a deaf ear to the call of humanity, and shun his fellow beings to brood on himself. Religion makes man ego-centric. Though it upholds morality, there is in it a strong non-ethical element.

As we shall develop the relation between morality and religion, it will be seen how far this position of the ethicist with regard to religion is tenable. It is true that religious conceptions, beliefs, methods, and customs are extremely varied, yet, underlying all these divergences, there is the unity of fundamental spiritual principles. The following three may be noticed as the common background of religions:

1. There is one Supreme Being, self-existent, self-luminous, permeating the whole universe and enfolding all beings and things.

2. Man's real self, the soul (Atman), is ever united with the Supreme Being.

3. The *summum bonum* of life consists in the realization of this union.*

* In the opinion of many great scholars Buddha did not deny the existence of God. Nirvana in Buddhism means the extinction of the psychological self, not of the metaphysical Self. In fact Buddha taught nothing but what the Upanishads teach. Mahayana Buddhism deviates very little from the Vedanta. Amar Sinha, the great Bud-

The same spiritual truths are also the basis of morality. If the theologians as well as the moralists were to take their stand on this common meeting-ground, a much deeper world-understanding would be achieved thereby than through mere ethics. Also in moral matters there seems to be as much difference of views in these days as in religion. Though a general agreement appears to exist among religionists as far as the fundamental moral principles are concerned, yet in the practical application of these principles vast differences become evident. In practice the ideals of truthfulness, non-violence, temperance, chastity, charity, and so forth, widely differ among the various races, nations, communities, and cults of the world. So ethics, too, does not easily provide a common meeting-ground for all.

A most vital question is raised in the Bhagavad-Gita: What makes man immoral? What is it that impels man to sinful deeds against the remonstrance of his reason and the resistance of his will? Sri Krishna answers: 'It is greed (Kâma-*esha*)' (III. 37). Greed is the natural outcome of attachment to the body. When man denies or ignores his real self, the soul (Atman), which is pure, illumined, and free (Shuddha-Buddha-Mukta), and thinks of himself primarily as the physical body, his chief concerns in life centre in the body. To preserve the body, to make it comfortable, to glorify it, becomes the principal objective of his life. He relies on the senses, highly values the sense-world as real, and wants to satisfy the senses by all possible means. But the senses are insatiable. They want more and more. This creates greed, which breeds all

dhist lexicographer, calls Buddha Advayavadi (a non-dualistic Vedantist) in his lexicon.

vices, such as selfishness, hatred, pride, anger, jealousy, hypocrisy, and so forth. The more we identify ourselves with the body, and the more we value the sense objects, the greater is the domination of greed over us. It may be the greed of possession, of power, or of fame. When the sensuous outlook on life becomes predominant, the intellectual and moral values seem less important than the material values. Morality becomes a matter of expediency rather than a question of principle. To be moral in the real sense therefore, it is necessary to get rid of the body idea.

Even though a man may be unaware of his spiritual being, still it asserts itself through his mind and makes him feel, however vaguely, his inner purity and deeper relationship with others. From this the moral sense in man derives, which functions as conscience (Viveka) or moral intuition (Prajna), when developed. There is within us on the one hand the urge of the soul and on the other the urge of the flesh. This causes the inner conflict of good and evil in practically every person. The more he attunes himself to the soul, the stronger grows his moral nature; the more he attunes himself to the body, the weaker it becomes. This may happen consciously or unconsciously. Every moral deed we do serves to bring us nearer the soul, nearer the Supreme Spirit, God. He who follows the path of righteousness without the thought of the soul or God is a moral man; he who does the same with the idea of attaining unto God and soul is a spiritual man. But the same principle holds good for both of them: the more a person gets attached to the body, the less is his control over the body and the senses, and the more selfish he is; the more a person feels himself distinct from the

body or the psycho-physical complex, the greater is his control over the body and the mind, and the less selfish he is. The standard of morality, according to Hindu ethics, is to be found in the following statement of Vyasa, the celebrated author of the Mahabharata: Paropakâro punyaâya pâpâya parapidanam—To do good to others is virtue; to injure others is vice. In other words, to be unselfish is moral; to be selfish is immoral.

So we find that moral consciousness is in the very constitution of man. It is not imposed upon us by society, as the psycho-analysts opine, nor is it infused into us by injunctions and prohibitions, as some religious leaders hold, nor can it be grafted on us by the State, as totalitarianism presumes. External conditions no doubt help or retard its growth. In most people the moral nature is undeveloped. Even among such as know the right and intend to follow it there are many who have not the strength to act accordingly. But if they reflect on the evil consequences of their wrong way, persist in their efforts to do right, contact righteous persons, and study ennobling literature, their moral character develops correspondently and paves the way for the spiritual life. Only such as faithfully perform their duties, practise self-control, are honest and guileless, can attain the inner purity and clarity of vision that brings home to them the evanescence of sense objects and the futility of worldly desires. It is they who seek the real, the eternal, the immutable. They crave for freedom from every bondage. They come to know that it is the realization of Truth and Truth alone that can make them free. This is spiritual awakening. With it comes the awareness of the reality of the Spirit behind the changefulness of matter, and the

attainment of the Spirit as the very substance and fulfilment of one's being presents itself as being the highest goal of life. Here is the line of demarcation between the moral and the spiritual life. Spiritual life begins only when one turns away from the changeful to the changeless, from the evanescent to the eternal, from the unreal to the real; in short, from matter to spirit. Matter is conditioned; spirit is unconditioned, self-existent, self-luminous, perfect. The entire relative existence, including mind, belongs to the category of matter. Even a man highly advanced in the moral life or who is a great philanthropist may not be a spiritual person. The distinction between a religious and a spiritual person may also be pointed out here. He who believes in some spiritual entity and man's relationship with it, however vague or clear the conceptions may be, and acts according to that belief, can be called a religious person. But he should not be considered spiritual until he chooses the attainment of spiritual perfection as the supreme end of life and is ready to strive after it. A spiritual person is religious as well.

The thirst after supreme knowledge and bliss renders the moral life of a spiritual person more natural and smooth. He has less difficulty in controlling his desires. His desires change their course, as his mind turns from the temporal to the divine. Instead of flowing towards the sense objects they gravitate towards the Divine Self within. As he contemplates on the Divinity, its sublime influence transforms the sensuous outlook on life, making him more and more conscious of the innate purity and blissfulness of the Self. The outgoing tendencies of the mind subside and an inwardness develops. His desires are transformed into love of God. The moral life is not

secure nor smooth until the mind is able to grasp something far more valuable than sense objects and is naturally drawn thereto by its sublime worth and attractiveness.

Evidently a spiritual aspirant is indrawn and contemplative. This does not mean, however, that he is less active or less capable of work than others. Rather his contemplativeness balances his activity. It must not be forgotten that a long preparation through self-discipline and faithful discharge of duties, domestic as well as social, has developed in him the inner consciousness of a spiritual aspirant. So his capacity for work is already well developed. Such are the true types of workers, in whom action and contemplation go together. They act rightly and efficiently who can think and will rightly and efficiently. He who is self-collected, calm, and cool-headed always works better than he who is ever active with a distracted and unsettled mind.

Though contemplation is greatly conducive to the spiritual life, yet action is not incompatible with it. One can develop spiritual consciousness through work as well. The distinction between the secular and the spiritual is in the difference of the outlook on life. By cultivating the right attitude of the mind the common deeds of life as well as the social activities can be turned into means of spiritual development. This method of converting work into worship is known as Karma-Yoga. It removes the antithesis between the secluded and the social life and combines in a single process the outer and the inner growth. Its first great exponent was Sri Krishna, whose genius has harmonized mysticism, knowledge, devotion and action. **Declares** he in the Bhagavad-Gita:

'Being steadfast in Yoga, O Dhananjaya, perform actions, abandoning

attachment, remaining unconcerned as regards success and failure. This evenness of mind is called *Yoga*' (II. 48).

'The *Gunas* of *Prakriti* (body, senses, and the mind) perform all actions. With the understanding deluded by egoism, a man thinks, "I am the doer"' (III. 27).

'He who can see inaction in action, who can also see action in inaction, he is wise, he is devout, he is the performer of all actions' (IV. 18).

'He who performs actions surrendering them to Brahman (God) and abandoning attachment is not tainted by their merits and demerits, even as a lotus leaf by water' (V. 10).

One absolute condition of the spiritual life is non-attachment, which means freedom from egoism. It is egoism, the identification of the self with the non-self, which, asserting itself as I-ness and my-ness, produces attachment. The spiritual man, being free from egoism, performs his work in the most unselfish manner. Religion enjoins renunciation on spiritual aspirants. But renunciation does not necessarily mean the abandonment of society. Its real sense is the severance of attachment by the conquest of egoism. One can live in society in the true spirit of renunciation. It depends on the aspirant's mental make-up, his environment, and the particular method of spiritual culture he follows.

Meditation is of the greatest help in the cultivation of spiritual consciousness. The practice of meditation requires seclusion. The more profound the subject, the deeper must be the meditation; and the greater is the need of seclusion. All great thinkers, philosophers, scientists, artists, and the like, feel the necessity of isolated life. Religion deals with the highest truths. It does not rest contented with concep-

tual knowledge. Its goal is the immediate apprehension of the Supreme Reality by complete absorption of the mind. So in the mystic's life there is the greatest need of seclusion. All spiritual persons are mystically minded. All seek the direct vision of Truth. But most of them do not leave society, though some may not enter into family life. They combine action with meditation. But there are just a few others in whom the mystical nature becomes so predominant that they can devote all their time to meditation, whose longing for God-vision proves to be so intense that their minds refuse to think of anything else but God. Only such as these are considered free from obligations to society. They alone are entitled to a life of retirement from the world. But though they may leave the world, their life still remains a blessing.

Now, you may say. 'Does it not spell selfishness to abandon human society for the sake of one's perfection? How can the selfish be perfect? Every spiritual person is anxious for his own liberation, for this is the ideal religion sets up before him. Even if he works for society, he does not care for it as much as for his self-purification. He is so engrossed with himself. He is self-centred. Even if he leaves society, religion approves it. Hence it is not wrong to say that religion makes a man ego-centric.' Such as prefer this charge should remember that religion makes a distinction, and a very valid one, between the ego and the soul, between the unreal and the real self. Neither the body, nor the mind, nor their conjunction, is the real self of man. Yet man thinks of himself as a mere physical or a psycho-physical being and forgets his real self, the changeless soul, the only constant factor in him, which maintains his identity in spite of all the changes of

the body and the mind, watches all their movements, and co-ordinates all their functions. It is the unawareness of the real self and the misapprehension of the non-self as the self that is the cause of all bondage and all suffering in life. Man is *born* ego-centric. It needs no religion to make him so. On the contrary, it is the aim of religion to make him 'soul-centric' by completely eradicating his egoism and making him aware of the true nature of the self. The soul (Atman) is ever pure, illumined, and free. It is simply the realization of the true self that sets one free. So the spiritual person centres himself not on the ego, but on the soul. If he seems to be concerned about his ego, it is merely to overcome it. He struggles to supplant ego-consciousness by soul-consciousness.

It is the consciousness of the spiritual self that makes a man unselfish in the real sense. The soul is not limited to the body. It is one with the Supreme Spirit, which is the Soul of all souls. So when you realize your real self and thereby your unity with the Divine, you find yourself in others as well. Thus self-knowledge leads to self-expansion. All the efforts and struggles of a spiritual person for individual freedom inevitably result in this. It is the surest and soundest way to unselfishness. 'Knowledge leads to self-identification with others like the self-identification with the body,' says the *Panchadashi*. (VI. 285).

Apart from metaphysical and psychological considerations, the distinction between the soul and the ego is valid on moral grounds as well. Without this morality has not a leg to stand on. If this ego is real and true, one can very well say, 'Why should I be unselfish? I must seek my own interests. I see my pleasure and pain are distinct from those of others. Why

should I not make myself happy? I must aggrandize myself.' You may answer such, 'Your interests must not clash with the interests of others. If every one clamours for his own interests, there will be chaos, in which case the interests of all will suffer. Your interests are bound up with the interests of others. So it is wise to make your interests consistent with or subordinate to the common weal.' This is how we are led to curb our ego and cultivate social virtues. Evidently it is not unselfishness that impels us to do so. Here there is no spirit of sacrifice for the common good, but only mutual consideration of the material interests of life resulting in a compromise of interests. In a way it is an 'appeasement' of the ego. And the ego, whose creed is greed, refuses to be appeased. So there is constant conflict between individual and individual, nation and nation, mass and class, Labour and Capital, people and State.

Even when we seem to identify ourselves with the family or society or a nation or race, and so forth, we seldom sacrifice our ego. It is more often an enlargement of the ego rather than self-expansion. So in most cases no self-purification is evident. On the contrary, demoniacal nature prevails. It is very often found that a dutiful, loving father does not hesitate to ruin his neighbours or cheat the world for the sake of his family; that a faithful member of a community turns to be a sworn enemy of the aliens; that a patriotic national leader plays the devil to other nations, there being no crime he cannot perpetrate in the name of his nation.

Nevertheless we feel we should not be ego-centric, we must sacrifice our own interests for the sake of others, we must be unselfish regardless of personal considerations, unselfish for the sake of un-

selfishness. This shows that we regard unselfishness as a value higher than the material interests of life. We want to do good to others simply because it is good to do so. So there is an inherent tendency in us to forgo the ego, to be at one with others. The reason is that we perceive, however vaguely, a subtle relationship with others much deeper than all the relationships of economic and intellectual interests. In fact, such relationship exists in the unity of all souls in the Supreme Spirit. We may or may not be conscious of it. Such as feel this relationship intensely may be without any knowledge of the soul, often become selfless workers in society, some of the great philanthropists being of this type. To such as these the utilitarian slogan 'The greatest happiness of the greatest number' or 'The greatest good of the greatest number,' as some prefer to have it nowadays, has an appeal. Otherwise, from the

standpoint of the ego or the separate individualities, it has no meaning. 'Why should I do the greatest good to the greatest number and not to myself? I shall do good to others only when it promotes my own interests.' There is no answer to this. All this becomes meaningful only through the recognition of the essential unity of all, and this is the very foundation of ethics. Religion wants us to feel this unity consciously by making us aware of our spiritual self and its oneness with the Infinite Self, which is the Self of all. Through the Infinite we reach all the finite. We understand our human relationships the best through our relationship with God. The more a person finds himself in God, the more he sees others in God, and the deeper he realizes his relationship with them. Thus, with spiritual consciousness a feeling for all naturally grows.

(To be continued)

"Every religion preaches that the essence of all morality is to do good to others. And why? . . . What is the reason that I should be moral? You cannot explain it except when you come to know the truth as given in the Gita—'He, who sees everyone in himself, and himself in everyone, thus seeing the same God living in all, he the sage no more kills the Self by the self.' Know through Advaita that whomsoever you hurt, you hurt yourself; they are all you. Whether you know it or not, through all hands you work, through all feet you move, you are the king enjoying in the palace, you are the beggar leading that miserable existence in the street; you are in the ignorant as well as in the learned, you are in the man who is weak, and you are in the strong; know this and be sympathetic."

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SRI AUROBINDO

BY PROF. S. K. MAITRA, M.A., PH.D.

(Continued from the March issue)

II

THE SUPERMIND

In my first article I have shown that a link is necessary between Sachchidananda and the world, and that this link cannot be Mind. Mind has certain fundamental limitations which render it unfit to serve as a link between God and the world. Mind, as Sri Aurobindo points out, 'is not a faculty of knowledge nor an instrument of omniscience; it is a faculty for the seeking of knowledge, for expressing as much as it can gain of it in certain forms of a relative thought and for using it towards certain capacities of action.' He further says, 'It is the power which interprets truth of universal existence for the practical uses of a certain order of things; it is not the power which knows and guides that existence and therefore it cannot be the power which created or manifested it' (*The Life Divine* Vol. I. pp. 178-79).

It is clear, therefore, that the link must be something higher than Mind. It must retain the true nature of Sachchidananda and not exhibit it in a veiled, distorted or diluted form. It must at the same time be the consummation and fulfilment of Mind and not merely related to it as something transcendent. Such a link is the Supermind.

The Supermind is called by Sri Aurobindo 'Real-Idea.' By giving it this name he wants to emphasize the fact that 'it is a power of Conscious Force expressive of real being, born out of real being and partaking of its

nature, and neither a child of the Void nor a weaver of fictions. It is conscious Reality throwing itself into mutable forms of its own imperishable and immutable substance' (Ibid. p. 177).

Sri Aurobindo also calls it a Truth-Consciousness. The name, he says, he has borrowed from the Rig-Veda. In the Rig-Veda 'Rita-cit' means 'the consciousness of essential truth of being (Satyam), of ordered truth of active being (Ritam) and the vast self-awareness (Brihat) in which alone this consciousness is possible.'

The Supermind thus is the Creative Idea which retains to the full the truth of the Supreme Reality. Mind, Life and Matter are an inferior expression of it which serves as a goal towards which these are trying to move. It creates a world of 'phenomenal reality of variable conscious being which, inevitably drawn towards its own essential Reality, tries at last to recover it entirely whether by a violent leap or normally through the Ideal which put it forth.'

It is, in fact, nothing else than God as Lord and Creator. It is, however, different from the Ishvara of the Vedantist or the Demiurge of Plato. The Ishvara of the Vedanta is not the Absolute in its pure untarnished form. It is the Absolute seen through its reflection in Maya, which reflection partially disguises and even distorts its true nature. Sri Aurobindo in this matter wants to go back to the unsystematized Vedanta of the Upanishads, which is innocent of this conception of a Maya-ridden Ishvara, and to the

standpoint of the Vedas. The sages who said. "यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते। येन ज्ञातानि ज्ञेयानि। यत् प्रयन्त्यभिसविष्यन्ति" did not contemplate a Creator who was himself shrouded in Maya.

The Supermind is likewise different from the Demiurge of Plato. The Greek philosophers were in a fix to explain the origin of motion. Parmenides denied motion altogether, and the result was that the whole of creation was nothing but an illusion to him. Anaxagoras, a realist, took the created world to be real, but he had to face the difficulty of accounting for the generation of motion from a plurality of static beings. This difficulty he tried to solve with the help of the principle of *Nous* or Reason which, being incorporeal, he thought could alone impart motion. But the *Nous* had no relation whatsoever either to the infinity of primeval seeds or to the world of generation which it helped to bring about. It was a pure *deus ex machina*, brought in for the sake of solving an insoluble difficulty.

The difficulty persists even in Plato. In the account of creation which he gives in the 'Timaeus,' Plato conceives the Demiurge or Creator as creating according to an archetype or pattern. But if that be the case, what is his relation to the archetype? Is the archetype created or not created? Plato reluctantly declares that it cannot be created, for then it would be imperfect, and God would in that case be creating the world according to an imperfect pattern, which could not be, as it would militate against God's goodness. But if it is not created, then either God would be subordinate to it or it would be co-eternal with God. Jowett in his masterly introduction to this dialogue has tried his best to explain the difficulty, but he has to confess that it does not admit of any satis-

factory solution. 'We must reply again,' he says, 'that we cannot follow Plato in all his inconsistencies, but that the gaps of thought are probably more apparent to us than to him. He would perhaps have said that the "first things are known only to God and to him of men whom God loves." There are other difficulties in Plato's theory of creation, namely, his admission of a prior existence of Matter and also the problem of Evil, which are traceable to the same cause, namely, the loose manner in which his conception of a Creator is related on the one hand to the Ideas and on the other, to the world of creation.'

Sri Aurobindo's conception of the Supermind is free from the difficulties of the Vedantist or of Plato. Their mistake lay in thinking that the creative principle was something different from the ultimate reality. The result of this was either (as in the case of the Vedanta) that the world came to be regarded as unreal, or (as in the case of Plato) that the unity of the system was destroyed and the Ultimate Principle, the Creator and the World fell asunder.

The only philosopher I can think of who has succeeded in maintaining a continuity between the Absolute Reality, the Creator and the created world is Hegel. But Hegel did this work with help of his logic and by making Thought all in all, which suffered from the very serious defect that it gave no recognition to Will or to the suprarational powers of cognition.

The conception of the Supermind is the pivot round which the whole of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy moves. It is of the utmost importance to understand its true nature, and I shall therefore have to present in greater detail his view of it. Fortunately for us, Sri Aurobindo has dealt with it very

exhaustively in his book *The Life Divine*.

SUPERMIND AND MIND

The Supermind is not only Knowledge but also Will. As Knowledge it is twofold, namely, a pervading and comprehending knowledge and a projecting and apprehending knowledge. As Will it is not only a Will to light and vision but a Will to power and work. In general terms it may be described 'as a vastness beyond the ordinary firmaments of our consciousness in which truth of being is luminously one with all that expresses it and assumes inevitably truth of vision, formulation, arrangement, word, act and movement, result of action and expression, infallible ordinance or law' (Ibid. p. 187).

Its essential characteristics can be grasped from the fact that it is the link between Sachchidananda and Mind. It is also possible occasionally for human beings to get glimpses of it, and that is how our Vedic sages could describe its nature, although it is not yet given to man to dwell permanently in it. From its position as a link between the Absolute and the world, we get the following characteristics of it: 'It is a comprehensive and creative consciousness, by its power of pervading and comprehending knowledge, the child of the self-awareness by identity which is the poise of Brahman, and by its power of perfecting, confronting, apprehending knowledge, parent of that awareness by distinction which is the process of the Mind' (Ibid. p. 189).

It is the culmination and consummation of Mind: it is all that the Mind strives to be but cannot attain. Mind can divide things and then can synthesize them; it can analyse a thing into its component parts and then piece them together and get an idea of a whole, 'but the ultimate unity and absolute

infinity are to its consciousness of things abstract notions and unseizable quantities, not something that is real to its grasp, much less something that is alone real' (Ibid. p. 191). It can analyse and synthesize but it can never have integral knowledge.

It is here that the Supermind steps in as the fulfilment and completion of Mind. It differentiates without dividing, as it integrates without joining. 'It establishes a Trinity, not arriving, like the Mind, from the three to the One, but manifesting the three out of the One—for it manifests and develops—and yet maintaining them in their unity—for it knows and contains. By differentiation it is able to bring forward one or other of them as the effective Deity which contains the others involved or explicit in itself, and this process it makes the foundation of all other differentiation.'

THE SUPERMIND AND INTUITION

We thus see that there is a vast gulf between Mind and Supermind, and consequently it is necessary to seek an intermediary between them. Can intuition serve as such an intermediary? What is the relation between the supramental consciousness and intuition? As there is a lot of misconception on this point, I think it necessary to make clear Sri Aurobindo's views on it and also show how those views are related to those of one of the most celebrated Western philosophers of the present century—I mean Bergson, whose recent death has created a void in the philosophical world which it is difficult to fill. The question, unfortunately, has been further complicated by the ambiguity of the word 'intuition.'

Sri Aurobindo looks upon intuition as a communication to the mind from above. 'Intuition,' he says, 'brings to man those brilliant messages from

the Unknown which are the beginning of his higher knowledge' (Ibid. p. 102). He further calls it a projection of the characteristic action of these higher grades (that is, higher grades of consciousness) into the mind of Ignorance (Ibid. p. 418). Its value is very great, for it establishes a connection between Mind and what is above it.

Nevertheless it would be wrong to call it the highest form of consciousness. For in human mind 'its action is largely hidden by the interventions of our normal intelligence; a pure intuition is a rare occurrence in our mental activity.' 'What we call by the name is usually a point of direct knowledge which is immediately caught and coated over with mental stuff, so that it serves only as an invisible or a very tiny nucleus of a crystallization which is in its mass intellectual or otherwise mental in character' (Ibid. p. 418). Very often 'the flash of intuition is quickly replaced or intercepted, before it has a chance of manifesting itself by a rapid imitative movement, insight or quick perception or some swift-leaping process of thought which owes its appearance to the stimulus of the coming intuition but obstructs its entry or covers it with a substituted mental suggestion, true or erroneous, but in either case not the authentic movement.'

Intuition, thus, being overlaid with mental stuff and its flow being frequently interrupted by imitative mental movement, is not in a position to give us that integral experience which alone reveals the ultimate truth. No wonder, then, that it is followed by Reason, for at the level of mind in which we are, Reason alone can organize and articulate our experience. This is, indeed, what happened in our own country when the intuitive age of the Vedas and the Upanishads was followed by an age of Reason. This is not to be

regarded as a retrograde movement, as a downward march, for the lower faculty gets an opportunity of assimilating as much as it can of what the higher has left and thereby transforming itself and preparing itself for the reception of the higher truths.

From this brief sketch of the intuitive process as understood by Sri Aurobindo, it would appear that the reason why he does not regard it as the highest form of consciousness is that it is under the influence and control of mind. Human intuition is always more or less under such influence and control and can therefore never be the same as the pure truth-consciousness or supramental consciousness. If it were possible for us to have an intuition completely free from all mental action, then we could have the ultimate truths revealed through it. In fact, Sri Aurobindo calls such an intuition the supreme intuition.

Let us now see what Bergson thought of intuition. He defined intuition in his *Introduction to Metaphysics* as 'a kind of intellectual sympathy by which one places oneself within an object in order to coincide with what is unique in it and consequently inexpressible.' In another passage of the same book he called it 'an intellectual auscultation.' It is thus a direct approach to reality which, in Bergson's opinion, enables us to enter into the heart of it. Any other approach, such as, for instance, the intellectual approach, will not, he thought, take us to the heart of reality but will only make us describe a circle round it. It follows, therefore, that the only way of knowing reality is by way of intuition.

This view of intuition, however, is not free from difficulty and raises a number of questions. In the first place, we may ask: Do we get this intuition naturally, that is, without our seeking it, or does it require any effort on our

reality, with its separate action and principle of development, although it shows also how it combines harmoniously with the other powers of the Supreme Reality.

Further, he says, 'Overmind consciousness is global in its cognition and can hold any number of seemingly fundamental differences together in a reconciling vision' (Ibid. pp. 428-29). Where the mind sees irreconcilable differences, the Overmind intelligence perceives coexistent correlatives; what to the mind are contraries are to the Overmind complementaries.

THE SUBLIMINAL SELF

We have so far dealt with the surface consciousness—the surface mind, life and matter. But there is also an inner stratum within us—the subliminal Self. There is a subliminal mind, life and matter which is more plastic, more powerful, more capable of dynamic action than our surface mind, life or body. 'The subliminal mind in us is open to the Universal knowledge of the cosmic mind, etc.' (Ibid. p. 337). The subliminal are functions of our larger

and truer personality. In the subliminal our individuality is close to the universality and is in constant contact with it.

This subliminal Self plays a very important part in the process of the ascent to the Supermind. Indeed, without any awakening of this Self, no ascent to a higher consciousness is possible. This Self 'is capable of a direct communication with the universal forces of the cosmos, a direct feeling and opening to them, a direct action on them and even a widening of itself beyond the limits of the personal mind, the personal life, the personal body, so that it feels itself more and more a universal being no longer limited by the existing walls of our too narrow mental, vital, physical existence. This widening can extend itself to a complete entry into the consciousness of the cosmic mind, into unity with the universal life, even into oneness with universal Matter.' Once we make an entry into this inner being, our inner Self will be found to be capable of an ascent upwards into things beyond our present mental level.

(To be continued)

SAVITAR

A STUDY IN THE RIG-VEDA

By DR. Y. VENKATARAMIAH, D.Sc. (Paris)

[A pathetic interest attaches to this paper, for the young and talented author was snatched away in the prime of youth by the cruel hand of death. We are told that friends have made arrangements to bring out in the form of a book his researches on 'Savitar.' As may be seen by a perusal of this paper, the author identifies Savitar with the Aurora Borealis. The sense of wonder and the poetic insight of the ancient Aryan seers led them to recognize the manifestation of the Deity in all that was beautiful and awe-inspiring. What can be more beautiful than the northern lights that break away the gloom of the long winter night of the Arctic regions?—Ed.]

It is well known to all scholars versed in the Vedas that Sayana, in the introduction to his Bhashya, stresses the importance of the study of the Vedas with a clear knowledge of the meaning of the texts, but attaches little value to merely memorizing them. His Bhashya has remained ever since and still continues to be the unquestioned authority in the interpretation of the amazingly vast number of hymns composing the Vedas. We cannot, therefore, fail to follow him, in general, in a consideration of the Vedic hymns which may engage our attention.

I have devoted some years to a study of the Rig-Vedic hymns and come to definite conclusions about the nature of Savitar, and these form the groundwork of a book which I have prepared and which I hope to publish at an early date.

Sayana bases his commentary on what are known as the six Vedangas, to which I have also strictly adhered. In the interpretation of the hymns with which I am concerned I have taken one of the several meanings which a word is capable of in Sayana's own judgement, while I have not taken liberties with the case and number of the expressions in the text. Thus, I have taken 'Dhana' to mean 'light,' which Sayana himself accepts. And what is more, I have had no occasion to resort to Upalakshana to

force my meaning into the text. And if I have departed from Sayana in different places, I have done so without violating the laws laid down in the Vedangas, and in so far as Sayana seems to me, as he will seem to every intelligent reader, to have confused the issues involved in interpreting some important 'Riks.' With our present-day advance in geographical knowledge, we are in a position to throw considerable fresh light on the meaning of some 'Riks' which undoubtedly refer to certain natural phenomena peculiar to some parts of the globe and totally absent in our own country.

The Vedic Rishis credited the forces of Nature with conscious individuality, and worshipped and lauded them and offered sacrifices to them in the belief that they rule the destinies of men and that it is in their power to protect us by averting danger and by showering on us the gifts solicited of them. The gods so worshipped are legion, among whom figure the Orbs of Sun and Moon, the Earth, Ushas, Savitar and elements such as Agni. I have concerned myself chiefly with Savitar and Surya whose identity has been taken for granted by Sayana and by most Western and Eastern scholars alike after him, in spite of internal evidence to the contrary.

In the Rig-Veda, the oldest of the

scriptures, whole hymns are separately addressed to the two gods; and in my book I have devoted my particular attention to those hymns which claim Savitar as their presiding deity. In eleven entire hymns Savitar is hailed and lauded as the stimulator of all things and the giver of light, which seems to have decided Sayana in regarding him as identical with Surya or at any rate as a phase of day's luminary. However, when we fix our regard on these hymns without letting Sayana's interpretation prejudice our vision, we are made aware of certain distinctive attributes of this strange deity which we never experience in contact with the Sun. A close examination of (I-35) the 35th hymn in the first Mandala which I have discussed stanza by stanza in my book, has yielded me certain data which constitute the basis of my theory. Thus Savitar, unlike Surya, is a nocturnal deity who presides over a luminous phenomenon which enlightens night as is indicated by the following 'Riks.'

आ कृष्णेन रजसा वर्तमानः (I-35-2), निवेशयन् प्रवृषन्नक्तुभिर्जगत् (IV-53-3), अपसेधन्न-सोपांतुधानानस्यादेवः प्रतिदोषं गृह्णानः (I-35-10), सनः क्षपाभिरहभिश्च जिन्वतु (IV-53-7), विद्यपयार्थं अन्तरिक्षाय यत्नतः . . . क्वेदार्थं सूर्यः कश्चिक्केत कतमांसां रश्मिरस्यात्तान (I-35-7), उदुष्यदेवः सविता दमूना हिरण्यपाणिः प्रतिदोष-मस्यात् (VI-71-1), हृदियेन दाशुपे यच्छति त्मनात्तत्रोमहां उदयान्देवो अक्तुभिः (IV-53-1).

Moreover, the electrical nature which is predicated of this god (X-149-2) and his kinship with another deity particularized by implication in the expression दंश्यस्य (I-35-5) figure nowhere in the Rig-Veda as epithets to Surya nor are they distinctly discernible facts of human perception when applied to Surya. From the meaning of Savitar as stimulator, Sayana identifies him with Surya, but in many places he contents himself by simply noting that Savitar is a god

or that he is a different form of Surya thus differentiating the two deities. He does not clearly state the nature of Savitar.

There are many facts which differentiate Savitar from Surya. Savitar is invariably spoken of as having two arms (VII-45-2, IV-53-3) and is broad-handed (II-38-2); no such description of Surya is found in the Rig-Veda. Savitar's chariot is drawn by two horses which are bay brown or dusky (I-35-3) whereas Surya is said to have seven green horses or one horse bearing seven names. The rays of Savitar are tremulous or deep quivering गभोरवेपाः (I-35-7) while the beams of Surya are moveless भ्रुवांसः (I-54-3). In VII-45-2 a wish is expressed that even Surya may grant him (Savitar) active vigour. In I-35-7 the poet asks 'where is Surya now--who knows which celestial sphere he illumines now, while he (Savitar) hath illumined the sky regions.' Taking I-35-9, we note अपामीवां बाधते वेति सूर्यमभिकृष्णेन रजसाद्यामृष्योति ॥ He destroyeth outright sickness and attendant distress, and acquires the function of the sun, and with darkness destroying light over-spreads the sky. In this verse वेतिसूर्य is explained 'he moves towards the sun' by Sayana, who adds 'even though Savitar and Surya represent one and the same deity, the phenomena are two different manifestations of the same deity, and in consequence one may be said to move towards the other. He has no choice but to explain the difficulty as he has done. A more rational explanation of वेतिसूर्य is सूर्यत्वं प्राप्नोति 'Acquires the function of the sun.' This is in conformity with the other attributes, viz. removing sickness, destroying darkness. 'But if the sun for six months in the year deprives the circumpolar countries of the splendour of its fires, an imposing phenomenon frequently illuminates the

long nights with dazzling radiance as if Nature sought to compensate for the absence of the orb of the day by the most impressive of all her optical wonders.' (*Earth and Sea* by Louis Figuier, 1874).

For the reasons enumerated above and for many more which I have adduced in my book in the course of the critical examination of the hymns, it is evident that the Rig-Vedic Rishis designated as Savitar some deity other than Surya, whom they believed to preside over the manifestation of some luciferous nocturnal phenomenon which they actually observed. Now, which deity is this Savitar? Which natural phenomenon was designated as such by the Vedic poets?

When we examine the hymns dedicated to Savitar, we shall find embodied in them fine and exact descriptions of the various forms of aurora borealis which is a common sight in the northern latitudes. I quote below a few hymns and append extracts from the writings of Western scientists and explorers for comparison. From a perusal of them one is struck by the sameness of the descriptions contained in them. In II-38-2 देव ऊर्ध्वः प्रबाहवा श्रुण्वणिः सिसर्ति 'The shining one, large-handed, extends his arms from on high.' Again in VI-71-1 उदुप्यदेवः सविताहिरण्यया बाहू

अयस्तसवनायसुक्रतुः 'Savitar hath lifted up his golden arms to impel all moving life to action.' In VII-45-2 उदस्यबाहू शिथिरा बृहन्ताहिरण्यया दिवोअन्तां अनन्ताम् 'His large golden arms, extended from on high, reach the ends of the sky.' In VI-71-3 he is spoken of as having tongues of flame: हिरण्यजिह्वः। Compare the following extracts.

'In the afternoon we had a magnificent aurora borealis—glittering arches across the whole vault of the sky from the east towards the west.' (Nansen's *Farthest North* Vol. I, p. 190). 'The arc

can also appear across the heavens from horizon to horizon.' (J. R. Astro. Soc., Canada, 1929).

'The arc has its highest point on the magnetic meridian and frequently seems to reach the horizon in the N.W.' N.E. The arc may be visible alone, but frequently from it rays appear to spread out like the spokes of a fan. At other times there is a rapid cross-motion and again they seem to shoot rapidly upward and then recede.' (*Ency. Brit.* 1932, p. 696.) 'Rays were emitted from a small luminous bow that appeared in the north. These rays, of a very decided greenish hue at the lower base, were on the contrary at their upper extremity of a splendid purple.' 'Now it is a fiery dew accompanied by a strange rustling sound; or it may appear in the form of sheaves of flame darting from the north to the various points of the compass.' (*The Atmosphere of Camille Flammarion* 1873, p. 497 and p. 503).

Savitar is said to have 'a hand of fair fingers' स्वंगुरिः। This indicated an arc form of aurora with upward streamers.

In interpreting I-35-3 Sayana reverses the order of the words प्रवता and उदुता and explains that the high path refers to the Sun's course from morning to noon and the lower to his course from midday to sunset. Macdonnell connects the hymn with evening and without reversing the order of the above words, seems to hold that the downward and the upward paths refer to the Sun's afternoon course and his next forenoon course respectively, with a hiatus of twelve hours in between. In this verse two white steeds of Savitar are mentioned. The stanza can be easily construed in terms of aurora borealis. That night the poet might have witnessed an auroral display consisting of two white arcs (two white horses) first above the horizon with upward flowing streamers. Aurora sometimes proceeds upward from

below the horizon and sometimes makes its appearance at the zenith and then travels downward. The poet seems to dwell on this aspect of aurora when he says that the god goes 'by the low path and by high' with two white steeds. The Deva comes from the sky's end. 'Homogeneous quite arcs—they can appear near the horizon and between the arc and the horizon a dark segment is often seen; narrow or broad, very often diffuse along the upper border but sharp along the lower one. Then the arc is double, the upper arc can turn around in the eastern end and continue as the lower arc (on the northern hemisphere). The lower border can be regular like a rainbow or can be more irregular (in the latter case very often strongly luminous) and transforming soon afterwards into rays.' (J. R. Astro. Soc., Canada, 1929).

'The auroral rays seem to shoot rapidly upward and then recede.' (*Ency. Brit.* 1932, p. 636).

I-35-4. This stanza embraces a description of aurora in its various aspects. Sayana's elaboration of the many forms of gold in the chariot is fanciful. It is ornamented, he says, with here a row of golden elephants, there a group of horses, elsewhere a collection of human forms and so on. The epithets अग्नीवृतम्, कृष्णैर्विश्वरूपं, चित्रभानुः acquire a startling significance in connection with Savitar when aurora is substituted. 'The aurora borealis is one of the most beautiful spectacles in the sky. The colours and shape change every instant, sometimes a fan-like cluster of rays, at other times long golden draperies gliding one over the other. Blue, green, yellow, red and white combine to give a glorious display of colour.' (*Forces of Nature*).

'There are many types of auroral phenomena, sometimes several types appearing simultaneously. These are

known as arcs, rays, bands, curtains, draperies, coronas and diffuse glows. When the arc is faint it is generally white, if fairly bright, yellowish, and when bright, many other colours particularly red and green appear.' (*Ency. Brit.* 1932, p. 606). 'At other times the display begins with nearly vertical curtains of light the folds of which keep changing in form. It is often a fascinating and resplendent spectacle and it is pardonable if a word picture falls short of the reality.' (Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institute, 1936. *Northern Lights* by A. P. Eve, p. 147).

A reference may be made to I-24-7 and X-139-2, and also to I-36-13 in which the streamer or pillar form of aurora is indicated.

The strikingly pulsating characteristic of aurora is described in several Riks. II-38-3. आशुभिश्चिधान्विमुचाति नूनमरीर-मदत्तमानं चिदेतोः। अहर्षणां विषययां अविष्या-मनुवर्तसवितुमोक्षयागात् ॥

'Savitar (moving in the firmament) is abandoned by the fast moving (rays of light). Verily, (he) by his movement has gladdened (again) the fast moving (life). And he has checked the movement of those rays of light that glide like serpents. Night succeeds (the cessation of the activity) of Savitar.' This translation differs from that of Sayana. Compare also III-38-9, VII-38-2.

'Pulsating arcs—parts of an arc can flare up and disappear regularly with a periodicity of about 20 seconds. The pulsation can often be more rapid and much more intense in such a way that whole arcs appear and disappear one after another almost at the same place.' (J. R. Astro. Soc., Canada, 1929).

'Presently the aurora borealis shakes over the vault of heaven its veil of glittering silver changing now to yellow, now to green, now to red. It spreads, it contracts again in restless change, next

it breaks into waving many folded bands of shining silver, over which shoot billows of glittering rays, and then the glory vanishes. Presently it shimmers in tongues of flame over the very Zenith, and then again it shoots a bright ray right up from the horizon, until the whole melts away in the moonlight. But now it is growing again new lightnings shoot up, and the endless game begins afresh.' (Nansen's *Farthest North* Vol. I, p. 158).

Perhaps one of the most knotty verses which exercised the ingenuity of Sayana for a correct explanation is IV-53-5
 त्रिन्तरिक्षं सवितामह्निवना श्रीरजांसिपरिभूक्षी-
 रोचना । तिस्रो दिवः पृथिवीस्तिष्ठ इन्वति त्रिभि-
 र्वैरभिन्नोदकतिस्रना ॥

According to Sayana, the three divisions of the Antariksha are Vayuloka, Vidyut-loka, and Varunaloka. Savitar pervades the three regions which cause delight in the earth, mid-region and the firmament. Previously the three regions of the mid-region were spoken of but here mid-region is mentioned in general and hence there is no repetition. Being the lord of the three regions, i.e. earth, mid-region and the firmament, he pervades by his power—Agni, Vayu and Aditya (as they belong to the respective regions). Previously the three divisions of the mid-region were spoken of but hereafter the divisions of the earth and heaven will be stated. The three heavens are Indraloka, Prajapatiloka and Satyaloka. The threefold earth he pervades. He who so pervaded, by three functions i.e. of distributing heat, rain and cold, himself favourably minded, may he protect us. This explanation of Sayana leaves one in confusion and unconvinced. The following extract from Nansen's *Farthest North*, Vol. I, p. 187 throws a flood of light on the meaning of the stanza. 'There is the supernatural for you. The northern lights flashing in matchless power and

beauty over the sky in all the colours of the rainbow. The prevailing one was at first yellow, but that gradually flickered over into green and then a sparkling ruby red began to show at the bottom of the rays on the under side of the arch, soon spreading over the whole arch. And now from the far away western horizon a fiery serpent writhed itself up over the sky, shining brighter and brighter as it came. It split into three all brilliantly glittering. Then the colours changed. The serpent to the south turned almost to ruby red with spots of yellow, the one in the middle yellow and the one to the north greenish white. Sheaves of rays swept along the sides of the serpents driven through the ether-like waves before a storm wind. They sway backwards and forwards, now strong, now fainter again. The serpents reached and passed the Zenith.'

In the light of this extract, the simple and natural explanation of the verse seems to be—'Savitar by his greatness encircles the firmament on the three sides, presents light of three colours. Then spreads out three luminous forms and impels them to the Zenith. He completely fills with light the three regions—earth, mid-region and the firmament. By three acts (as the cause of the existence and activity of all moving life and as a source of light) himself protects.'

The observation of the Vedic poet gives us also the approximate height of the aurora which he at times noticed. In I-35-8—

अष्टौव्यव्यत्कुम्भः पृथिव्याक्षी धन्वयोजना
 सहसिन्धू ॥

'From the height of three Yojanas (about 80 miles) from the earth he hath illumined the eight points and the seven seas or lakes.' Sayana, however, takes it as 'hath illumined the three worlds which unite living beings to their respective enjoyments.' In I-128-8 Sayana

takes 'Yojana' as a measure of distance equal to a league. The same meaning may be adopted in this stanza I-35-8. 'Dhanva' means 'sky.' Hence the translation I have given above. 'Stromer has stated that the lower limit of height in Norway is 80 k.m. On two occasions at Saskatoon banks were photographed, the lower limits of which were at a height of only 60 k.m. The lowest recorded was at 59 k.m. In these photographs the intensity was good and the edge of the aurora clearly defined,' (*Reviews of Modern Physics* Vol. 9, No. 4, p. 413. *A Survey of the Facts and Theories of the Aurora* by E. W. Hewson).

'Prof. A. H. Newton gives the heights of 28 aurorae calculated by a new method by him ranging from 33 to 281 miles, with a mean of 130 miles.' (*Ency. Brit.* 9th Edition, Vol. III. Reprint 1898, p. 93).

'By this method an upper limit of from 50 to 240 miles and a lower limit of 50 to 100 miles have been fixed. These heights refer to auroras which occur in that portion of our atmosphere not illuminated by the sun.

'Trustworthy observers have, however, reported seeing the aurora between them and a mountain or a cliff or below clouds. This would mean an altitude of a mile or less.' (*Ency. Brit.* 14th Ed. 1932). In I-24-6 also there is an indication of the height of aurora. Savitar's paths, dustless and easy to travel, indicate a suspicion, if not a clear knowledge, on the hymner's part of the rarefied condition of the upper atmosphere (I-35-11).

We find comparisons instituted between Ushas and Savitar in respect of their splendour in VI-50-8 and VII-79-2. 'The northern lights being alone conspicuous in Europe had from the earliest periods various popular names in the northern languages. They were described by Gassendi in 1621 under the appella-

tion aurora borealis or "northern dawn," their simplest form suggesting the appearance of dawn or approaching sunrise in the northern horizon.' (*A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles* Vol. I, p. 567). 'Feeble glow near the horizon resembling the dawn, of white or red colour.'

'This form often is the upper part of an arc whose lower border is under the horizon.' (J. R. Astro. Soc., Canada, 1929).

In X-189-1, Savitar, the protector, is said to move through the air's mid-region in conjunction with Ushas or the light of the Sun which fountains forth in a continuous stream below the horizon. Sayana takes it that the deity presiding over the period between the birth of Ushas and sunrise, is Savitar. He gives the same explanation in V-81-4—'you mingle with the rays of the Sun, (He who is before sunrise is said to be Savitar; from sunrise to sunset he is said to be Surya) and go on both sides of the night.' If Savitar be the deity before sunrise, it is not intelligible how he can be said to go on the other side of the night, i.e. in the evening hours also. The following extracts furnish an explanation of the fact that Savitar 'goes on both sides of the night.' 'It was noted that quiet bands and arcs predominated in the early evening hours and forms with ray structure just before daylight in the morning.' (*A Survey of the Facts and Theories of the Aurora* by E. W. Hewson—*Reviews of Modern Physics* No. 4, Vol. 9, October 1937).

'One of the most spectacular aurora seen in Norway in the last twenty years occurred on the night of March 22-23, 1920. The measurement and calculation of these brought out the striking fact that after sunset and before sunrise the auroral rays had a considerably higher position than in the middle of the night. It was a remarkable violet grey

aurora appearing on September 8, 1926, which suggested to Stromer the conditions under which these high rays occurred. This aurora extended from the horizon in the west up to a certain height in the sky, and then disappeared, and was at the unusual height of 800-500 k.m. above the earth. The great height, unusual colour and situation near the region where the sun had set suggested that it lay in the upper atmosphere in full sunshine. A few rays seemed to extend into the earth's shadow, but were separated from the higher rays by dark intervals—the high rays of the brilliant aurora of 1920, seen before sunrise and after sunset, had been illuminated by the sun.' (*Reviews of Modern Physics* by E. W. Hewson).

'The most conspicuous features were red auroras of long duration and sunlit aurora rays of quite unusual height. The first sunlit aurora rays in the morning appeared five hours before sunrise in the N.N.E. The lowest points were at the border line between the sunlit and dark atmosphere at 600 k.m., and the summits reached the astonishing height of 1100 k.m. above sea level. The rays were red. Later sunlit aurora rays of the common feeble grey violet colour appeared and lasted till dawn.' (*Nature* April 8, 1937, p. 584, Carl Stromer, vide also the description by Nansen in his *Farthest North* Vol. I, p. 179).

I believe that I have adduced sufficiently convincing evidence that it is the aurora borealis which the Vedic Rishis designated by Savitar, which is the grandest phenomenon in the polar regions. 'What a strange world is that of the poles; nearly every night there is a more or less brilliant display of these auroral lights.' (*The Atmosphere of C. Flammarion*).

According to the hymns, then, men were inhabiting a region illuminated nightly by Savitar. In I-110, the

hymner imparts to us that his ancestors, the Ribhus, the sons of Sudhanva Angiras, were at first mortals, that they had visited Savitar's abode after a long and arduous journey, desiring what deserves to be experienced, and that Savitar granted them immortality in appreciation of their worship of him. In VII-52-3, we learn that the energetic Angirasa spread desiring Savitar's excellent wealth. From the foregoing we conclude that the Aryans, at any rate, some of the clans, inhabited the polar regions where aurora borealis constantly manifested itself and that their descendants gradually drifted with the advent of the great ice age. From among the clans who had thus drifted away from auroral regions, people in a spirit of adventure or urged by faith would still travel north in quest of Savitar, and on their return, would be received with the rare honour of canonization. Worshippers of Savitar bore the title of 'Hiranyastupa.' The sacrifice they performed was called 'Hiranyastupa Vrata,' and it was a custom with them to instal 'Hiranyastupa' in their homes.

Commenting on hymn X-149, Sayana says that Hiranstupa, the author of the hymn, is the son of Hiranyastupa, who, in turn, is the son of Angirasa. Durgacharya, the well-known commentator on Yaska's *Niruktam*, on the other hand, observes that Angirasa Hiranyastupa of the hymn is invoking Savitar as Angirasa Hiranyastupa of a former age had done. After the departure of the Aryans from the polar regions, with the advance of centuries, Aurora faded out of people's memory and its identity got merged in that of the Sun. No wonder, therefore, that Sayana experiences difficulty in reading descriptions of the Sun and his activity into the Suktas which celebrate Savitar, whom we identify with aurora borealis.

In my book I have explained the 'Riks' in detail quoting authorities where necessary and also inserted photographs of the different forms of aurora for reference each in its context. I shall consider myself amply rewarded if competent scholars take it that my investigations, on the lines followed by me,

have yielded tangible results by throwing fresh light on one of the unintelligible portions of the Rig-Veda and that the identification of Savitar with aurora borealis lends unerring support to the theory of the arctic home of the Aryans or, at any rate, of some of the Aryan tribes.

GEOGRAPHICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF GAUDA

BY DR. DEBENDRA CHANDRA DAS GUPTA, M.A., ED.D. (Calif.)

(Concluded from the previous issue)

The architectural growth of the city of Gauda followed in the train of the commercial and political activities. In course of time the city came to be decorated with large number of buildings—growing larger and larger as time advanced. Unfortunately we have no trace of the architectural greatness of the city of Gauda under the Hindu rulers, as the Muhammadan rulers made it a point to destroy Hindu buildings, temples, and to build mosques out of the ruins of these. 'After the flight of the Raja, Bukhtyar gave up the city to be plundered by the troops, reserving for himself only the elephants and public stores. He then proceeded, without opposition, to Lucknowty, and established the ancient city of Gaur as the capital of his dominions. As a necessary part of this ceremony, he destroyed a number of Hindu temples and with their materials erected mosques, colleges, and caravanseries, on their ruins.'²⁵ The practice of the Muhammadan conquerors of building mosques on the ruins of the temples is concretely testified to by actual remains. Mr. Creighton whom we have several times quoted in this

thesis refers to actual plates showing the remnants of Hindu Divinity in pieces of stone which belonged to the Golden mosque. 'This plate (No. XVI. Varaha Avatara) represents the two sides of the same stone, being one of those taken from the inside of the small Golden mosque. The figure represented on the left hand, is that of the Hindu Divinity, Vishnu, incarnated in the Boar. It appears to have been the general practice of the Muhammadan conquerors of India, to destroy all the temples of the idolaters and to raise mosques out of their ruins.

'The figure (No. XVII. Sivani, a Hindu image) here represented is said to be that of Sivani, the consort of Siva, one of the Hindu triad. The stone on which it was carved was also found in the small Golden mosque.'²⁶

Though we have little knowledge of the architectural wealth of the Hindu Gauda, we know a good deal of it of the Gauda under its Muslim rulers, thanks to the accounts left by the Muslim historians and European tourists. The Muslim rulers of Gauda built forts, constructed palaces, erected monuments,

²⁵ Charles Stewart: *The History of Bengal* pp. 62-68.

²⁶ H. Creighton: *Ruins of Gauda* pp. 42-45.

mosques and towers, some of which remain even to this day. We propose to offer below a brief but systematic account of the architectural grandeur of Gauda under the Moslem rule.

Muhammad Bukhtyar Khiliji, the first Muslim conqueror of Bengal who assumed the title of Sultan Ghiyasuddin in the year 1203 A.D. made Lakhnauti or Gauda his capital and built the fortress of Basankot. This was a fort of considerable dimension.

Sultan Shums Addeen Bhengara, a descendant of Ilyas Khajc was elected the king of Bengal by the nobles, and he assumed the title of Nasir Shah in 1547 A.D. He built an extensive fortification around his capital evidently with the object of making it impregnable against invaders.²⁷ From a passage of the *Ain-I-Akbari* we gather that there was a strong fort on the western bank of the lake called Chhatiapatia meant for the purpose of protecting the city against invasion from the north, other sides of the city as we have already noted having strong natural barriers. According to Mr. William Hedges who visited the city in the seventeenth century the royal palace of Gauda was superior in point of grandeur and architectural design to similar palaces in European cities like Constantinople. His words are quoted below. 'May 16.—We spent 3½ hours in seeing the ruins, especially of the palace, which has been (as appears by the gates of it yet standing), in my judgement, considerably bigger and more beautiful than the Grand Seignor's Seraglio at Constantinople, or any other palace that I have seen in Europe.

'The building was chiefly of brick; the arches of the gates and many other places were of black marble, and other black hard stones to supply the want of

it, which is exceedingly rare and difficult to procure in this kingdom.'²⁸

Over and above building forts, the Muslim rulers of Gauda constructed mosques and erected monuments. We give below opinions of some European tourists on the magnificent ruins of mosques and monuments. A picturesque description of the ruins of a fort in Gauda is given by Mr. Creighton. The fort was rather a splendid palace of formidable dimensions having a length of nearly one mile and a breadth of half a mile surrounded by an earthen rampart reaching a height of forty feet. There was a large and deep ditch surrounding it. The northern gate of the city known by the name of Dakhil gate could be still traced. Within this enclosure there was a part of a brick wall forty-two feet high which surrounded a spacious palace 700 yards long and 100 yards wide. This huge edifice was divided into three apartments and it was evidently the king's palace. Within the palace the remains of Shah Husain's tomb were still visible. From the account we get an idea of the vastness, magnitude and magnificence of the architectural grandeur of Gauda. Jela Addeen, the son of Raja Ganesh, transferred his capital from Pandua to Gauda in 1392 A.D., and adorned it with beautiful mosques, baths and caravansaries.

Malick Andiel the Abyssinian slave who ascended the throne of Bengal (1491 A.D.) under the title of Firoz Shah constructed several mosques, minarets and reservoirs revealing no mean architectural grandeur. After the death of Sultan Alauddin Hussain Shah, his eldest son Nusserit Shah was elected to the throne by the nobility in 1521 A.D. To Nusserit Shah belongs the credit of erecting two mosques of superb architect-

²⁷ Charles Stewart: *The History of Bengal* p. 100.

²⁸ William Hedges: *The Diary* p. 88.

tural excellence, namely, golden mosque in 982 A.H. and Kadam Russul in 989 A.H. He also built a shrine in honour of the saint Mukhdum Akhi Sirajud-din at Sadu-t-laphur. Muhammad Shah, son of Alauddin who waded through a sea of blood—he murdered his young nephew, the son of Nusserit Shah—was the last independent king of Bengal. He built a mosque at Sadullapore.

It is, quite evident from the remarks of Reuben Burrow (as quoted by Creighton in his *Ruins of Gauda*), who visited the ruins in 1787 that the elimination of the architectural works of this ancient capital has been due more to the rapacity of men than to the destructive influence of time. Bricks and stones, especially stones from the buildings and gates of buildings, have been taken away by men for their own use. Only the brick buildings have been spared. 'Gour is an enormous heap of ruins, but seems to have been destroyed by the removal of the materials for' other purposes than by time. The fields about it have their 'soil composed, in effect, of nothing but broken bricks, and' those bricks have been so well made and burnt that the 'marks of the fingers of the makers are still to be seen on' many of the pieces. There are five large gates of the city 'still remaining, besides some beautiful entrances to the' tombs of the ancient princes, and mosques, etc. These 'tombs were, not long ago, in perfect order, and were held' in a manner sacred, till they were torn to pieces for the sake of the stone; indeed, such of the gates as happened 'to have no stone in them are almost perfect, but whenever' a piece of stone happened to be placed, the most elegant 'buildings have been destroyed to get it out, . . . '29 Rennell, a British officer of the East India Company, who also visited the

city of Gauda substantially agrees with Mr. Reuben in his description of it.³⁰

Ravenshaw, an officer of the British India Government, tells us that most of the villages and the regions surrounding Gauda bear evidence to the fact that the private houses there were constructed at least partly out of the bricks taken away from the architectural works of the capital. It is fortunate that some important buildings are now preserved by the Government of India for which they really deserve thanks. Among the important buildings thus preserved are Dakhil Darwaza, Firoz Minar, the Baradwari mosque or the Bara Sona Masjid, and the Lattan Masjid.³¹

The citizens of ancient Gauda both under the Hindu and the Moslem rule were divided into various classes—the nobility, the military class, the mercantile community, the priestly class, the educational fraternity, the dancers and musicians, the artisan class, the menials and others. We do not know much about the citizens under the Hindu rule; but there is reason to believe that the classes were very much the same under the Hindu as under the Moslem rule. First in point of importance is the all powerful class of nobility—both hereditary and nominated who made and unmade kings and influenced all governmental measures. This class of people were by birth and training politicians, diplomats and administrators capable of doing immense good and evil. There were very many able men among them and certainly there were also many turbulent agitators. The next in point of importance is the military class—the class of professional soldiers—who were very large in number. It may be remembered that prior to the time of Akbar the Muslim rulers of India had no

³⁰ James Rennell: *Map of Hindustan* pp. 55-56.

³¹ John Henry Ravenshaw: *Gaur: its Ruins and Inscriptions* p. 2.

²⁹ H. Creighton: *Ruins of Gauda* pp. 5-6.

professional paid soldiers but had feudal armies. Commanders of the army were given free lands in consideration of which they used to undertake to supply fixed number of soldiers in proportion to the size of the free lands enjoyed. Owing to the prevalence of this system the number of Moslem soldiers belonging to the military class must have been very large in the capital city of Gauda. Earlier still under the Hindu rule we have evidence of the existence of military class in the city as we were informed by Kalhana Misra that when Jayapida visited Pundravardhan, then a dependency of Gauda, found the citizens engaged in the worship of Kartikeya, the war-god. In connection with this ceremony a musical performance also was held.³² There was evidently a military class there. From what happened in the dependent city we may fairly conclude that there must have been a similar class of people given to the art of fighting.

The third class in point of importance is the community of merchants who played a very important part in the life of the city both under the Moslem rulers and their Hindu predecessors although we have very little definite knowledge of the state of things taking place under the Hindu rule. By its favourable geographical position to which we have already referred Gauda has always been a centre of commerce and the signs of its prosperity could be traced even in the midst of its ruins by William Hamilton. It may be noted that the Portuguese merchants came to Gauda for the purpose of commerce during the reign of Mahmood Shah, the last independent king of Bengal. Some Portuguese merchants who came to Gauda with presents were first detained and then released by the said king to

secure the Portuguese help against Sher Khan. Among other classes of citizens to be noted are the professional preachers and teachers, groups devoting themselves to various trades; and notably there were the class of architects who contributed to the architectural grandeur of the city. There were sculptors, painters, calicographers, etc. There were professional dancers and musicians who delighted the king, the nobility and the rich citizens with their performance.

Over and above, there were varieties of menial classes engaged in private and public services. According to the Portuguese authority Faria Souza the population of Gauda was over a million in the sixteenth century and its population was divided into seven classes, viz.:—(1) the nobility, (2) the military class, (3) the professional classes including the teaching fraternity, (4) the mercantile community, (5) the artisan class, (6) the musicians and dancers, and (7) the menial class.

Let us now proceed to discuss the political and cultural activities of Gauda from the standpoint of geography. Our knowledge of Gauda under the Hindu rule is comparatively meagre: yet we know something of it through various sources. It appears to have been selected as a capital of the province through favourable sites, considered from economic, political and strategic standpoints. The expression 'Lord of Gauda' that we come across in historical and semi-historical literatures refer to the city as well as to the province, sometimes to both; and the potentates so designated were not all necessarily Bengalees. The lords of Gauda had, in many cases, their capitals in cities other than Gauda.

Whatever part the city of Gauda might have played in the history of Hindu Bengal, the province of Gauda did play indeed an important part in

³² Kalhana Misra: *Rajatarangini* tr. by Dr. Stein, p. 160, verse 422.

the history of India. We learn from authoritative historians that the then lord of Bengal went to the assistance of Lalitaditya when he attempted to crush the ambitious king of Kanauj, the overlord of Gauda. Let us insert below an extract from *Rajatarangini*: 'King Lalitaditya, withering in a moment the mountain-like Yasovarman's troops (Vahini), resembled the fierce sun. [When it dries up a hill-stream (Adrivāhini)].'³³ 'Numberless elephants joined him from the Gauda land, as if attracted by friendship for the elephant [carrying] the conch of Laksmi, was attached [to the king].'³⁴ After this period the Gurjaras kept Bengal in subjugation for some time. Then came the period of anarchy to remedy which the people elected Gopala Dev as their king. He thus became founder of the famous Pala dynasty. The Palas style themselves as Lords of Gauda but they had their capital elsewhere, 'Although Gaur in Bengal was the original seat of the Pala family, there is no reason to doubt that they had acquired the paramount sovereignty of India, and that the seat of their Government was fixed for at last, in Kanauj.'³⁵

Ballal Sen, the famous king of Bengal, fixed his capital at the city of Gauda in the year 1169 A.D. His son Lakhman Sen transferred his capital to Navadwip and it was from this new capital that he was driven when Bukhtyar Khiliji invaded Bengal.

Bukhtyar Khiliji, the first Muslim conqueror of Bengal, selected Gauda as his capital for strategic reasons and it remained the capital of Bengal till the time of Ilyas Kaji. All the rulers of Bengal were theoretically dependent upon

the Pathan emperors of Delhi by whom they were appointed; at any rate their rulership had to be sanctioned by the Pathan emperors. Taking advantage of the geographical position of Gauda—its rulers from time to time would defy the Imperial authority whenever they could. One ruler Nasiriuddin, awed by the powerful Emperor Alaaddin, was content to remain as a mere vassal and the emperor reduced Bengal into two provinces, the capital of the eastern part being Sonergong. This happened in the year 1299 A.D. This arrangement did not prove happy. The newly appointed Governor of East Bengal revolted against the Imperial authority and had to be subdued. A new Governor was appointed in his place. A long period of anarchy and internecine strife followed till 1343 A.D. Ilyas Haji united the whole of Bengal and transferred his capital to Pandua. Gauda again became the capital of Bengal under Jelal Addeen in 1392 A.D. The successor of Jelal Addeen had diplomatic relationship with the Tartar ruler of Herat to check the invasion of Joanpur. The capital was transferred from Gauda to Ekdala for a short time under Sultan Ala Addeen Hussein Shah in 1489 A.D. During the reign of his son Gauda served as a refuge for the political offenders against the court of Delhi. When Baber defeated the last Pathan Emperor, Ibrahim Lodhi, many Pathan princes were given welcome, shelter and pension by Nussert Shah, the ruler of Bengal. Incensed by this Baber sent an army against the king of Bengal, but the Imperial wrath was pacified by presents and submission.

After the death of Baber, the ruler of Bengal assumed an independent position and intrigued against the emperor of Delhi with the ruler of Guzerat. Then followed the invasion of Sher Shah who ultimately became the emperor of India.

³³ Kalhana Misra: *Rajatarangini* tr. by Dr. Stein, Vol. I, p. 132, verse 184.

³⁴ Ibid. p. 135, verse 143.

³⁵ James Prinsep: *Essays on Indian Antiquities* p. 293.

The Emperor Humayon in order to punish Sher Shah came to Bengal, occupied Gauda, but ultimately had to meet with a disastrous defeat at the hands of Sher Shah who became the king of Bengal and Bihar and ultimately the Emperor of India. Under Cazy Fazlut the capital of Bengal was removed from Gauda to Tanda. Akbar's general Mainam Khan defeated Daud Khan, Pathan ruler of Behar and Orissa, and attempted to transfer the capital to Gauda in 1575 A.D., when a pestilence broke out claiming thousands of victims including the Imperial General Mainam Khan. "The City of Gore, which had been the capital of Bengal till the time of Shere, who on account of the badness of the air, had made Chawaffpoor Tanda the metropolis, was now greatly decayed. Chan Chanan admiring the antiquity and grandeur of that place, gave orders to repair the palaces, and made it his residence; but he soon fell a victim to the unhealthy air of Gore and died."³⁷ Never again did Gauda rise to eminence. Its subsequent revival was made impossible by nature. The course of the Ganges changed remarkably, so that after nearly two centuries, as we learn from Rennell, the site of Gauda stood at a distance of four miles and a half from the river bed. A part of the ruined city which was formerly washed by the waters of the Ganges stood at a distance of twelve miles. This being the case the revival of the city is out of the question. 'According to Ferishta's account, the unwholesomeness of its air occasioned it to be deserted soon after; and the seat of Government was removed to Tanda, or Tanrah, a few miles higher up the river.

'No part of the site of ancient Gour

is nearer to the present bank of the Ganges than four miles and a half; and some parts of it, which were originally washed by that river, are now 12 miles from it."³⁷

During the Hindu rule the cultural atmosphere of Gauda must have been an elevated one. The system of imparting education both higher and elementary was thoroughly efficient. The members of the royal family, the nobility and even the citizens at large were well educated. Not to speak of others even the actresses were well educated. In support of our contention we may refer to the story of Jayapida and Kamala the actress. The actress could understand Sanskrit enough to follow the king. 'From this verse which the king recited to himself, she, who was versed in [all] arts, knew him verily to be some great person."³⁸

As a great monument of the cultural activity of Gauda we may refer to its crude monarchs Balle Sen and Lakhman Sen, Balle being the author of Dana Sagara and Udbodha Sagara, the commentaries on Smritis and astrology.³⁹ Lakhman Sen was the author of many poems. These monarchs were great patrons of learning. Dhoyee and Jayadeva flourished in the court of Lakhman Sen.⁴⁰ The Muslim rulers of Gauda like their Hindu predecessors were great patrons of learning and promoters of culture. Bukhtyar Khiliji

³⁷ (a) James Rennell: *Map of Hindoostan* p. 55.

(b) H. Creighton: *Ruins of Gauda* p. 5.

(c) Major William Francklin: *Journal of a Route from Rajmahal to Gour, 1810-11 A.D.*, p. 1.

(d) Walter Hamilton: *Geographical Statistical and Historical Description of Hindoostan* vol. 1, p. 229.

³⁸ Kalhana Misra: *Rajatarangini* tr. by Dr. Stein, vol. i, p. 161, verse 442.

³⁹ R. D. Banerjee: *Banglar Itihas* pp. 292-293.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* p. 298.

³⁸ Mahummud Casim Ferishta: *The History of Hindoostan* tr. by Alexander Dow, vol. ii, pp. 270-271.

founded schools, colleges and made liberal grants to educational institutions.⁴¹

We have abundance of evidence to show that the science of iconography received maturity of perfection at Gauda both under the Hindu and the Muslim rule. The culture of Gauda was then a wonderfully perfect one. The king, the nobility, as well as the mercantile class received general as well as technical education of a high order. The masses were not also illiterate. The educational facilities must be of a high order where the very actresses could talk Sanskrit. Purely literary education was evidently supplemented by an aesthetic culture of a very high type.

The civilization of Gauda was, to a certain extent, influenced by minerals like copper, iron, silver and gold—a fact which is evident from copper plates, ancient coins and other iconographical and numismatic evidences.

⁴¹ Maulana Minhaj-ud-Din: *Abu-Umar-I-Uzman*, *Tabakat-I-Nasiri* tr. Major H. Raverty, p. 583.

We have reason to believe that Bengali was the language of Gauda which was not affected by foreign rule. 'Ormuz found the people of Bengal using Bengali as their vernacular in 1745 A.D. when Bengal was under Muslim rule.'⁴² A fact from which we can easily infer that Bengali must be the mother tongue of the citizens of Gauda although the court language was Persian.

From the foregoing pages it must have appeared to the reader that the civilization of Gauda both under the Hindu and the Moslem rule was purely an artistic civilization associated with the growth and development of fine arts, philosophy and religion with a good deal of military, political and commercial activities in the background. It was indeed a unique and splendid civilization comparable to any other civilization of the ancient times.

⁴² R. Orme: *A History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indoostan* Vol. ii, p. 5.

IN QUEST OF SADIUS

BY J. M. GANGULI

To many abroad India is a land of mystery and miracle. They have read and heard about strange and mysterious things happening in this ancient country; about the great spiritual advancement attained by the sages here; about deep forests and dark mountain caves, where Yogis and Sannyasins sit and have sat for years in meditation; about beautiful riverside Ashrams, where men on renouncing the world live to realize truth and everlasting happiness. They have heard also of some of the supernatural powers

of the Yogis acquired through difficult Yogic practices.

All the above is true. In fact, much more strange and mysterious things have happened and still happen than we ever come to know of. Some of the foreign tourists, who visit India more in quest of mystery than of the amenities of urban life in the country, have asked me where they could find a real Yogi possessed of miraculous powers. I have looked up in surprise at the question, for they seemed to think that Yogis were to be found sitting at

known places with name-plates hung outside their abodes.

Such an idea is not peculiar to foreigners, but is also found among even many educated Indians who believe that really advanced Sadhus could be found in abundance on the wayside in the Himalayas and other sacred places. Once, I know, on the occasion of the great Kumbha Mela at Hardwar, a very learned Sanskrit pandit, who is now on the staff of the Sanskrit College in Calcutta, being very keen on meeting a great Yogi, several of whom must have gone to Hardwar on that occasion, went about in search throughout the place only to be disappointed at the end. Not that he did not meet Sadhus, —there were many of them—but a Yogi of the type he was seeking, a real Yogi who had realized himself, to whom nothing was unknown, and who by practice and meditation had acquired even supernatural powers, none of which he had however use for, as he had conquered all desires, a perfect Yogi of that class did not come in his way.

Hungry, thirsty and exhausted when he was returning homeward in the evening he was accosted by an old friend of his, who was passing his retired life in Hardwar for several years, and to whom he narrated his disappointment. His friend smiled and asked how it was that in spite of his learning and wisdom it had not struck him that a Yogi would not go about proclaiming his identity and attracting people to him. How could he be recognized in the mass of sadhus who pretended to be Yogis?

That truism disillusioned the pandit, who went home pondering over the words of his friend, who had said that one must have acquired great virtues in order to have the good fortune to meet a Yogi, and that when one had

such virtue one would meet him even at one's own door without having to go about in his search.

I know and believe that as very true. I recognize fully well the strength in the argument with which the pandit's friend consoled him in his disappointment. I have myself said the same thing to many foreign enquirers and to my friends who have evinced interest in such things. But I have myself a weakness which I cannot get over, and which has taken me several times far away into lonely wildernesses in different parts of the country and at times into dangerous spots in the interior of the Himalayan jungles in search of real Yogis. The more I have read of the lives and deeds of great saints like Shankaracharya, who checked by his Yogic powers the onrushing floods of the Narbada to save his Guru, who was in meditation at the time on the river bank; of Trailanga Swami, who could remain under water for days together and who only about forty-three years ago left his physical body at Benares after having lived for two hundred and eighty years; of Gorakhnath, who practised hard Yoga for twelve years in the cold valley of Badrinath without food and who could walk on air and could infuse life into a doll of clay; and of others, the more impatient have I felt to meet a saint myself.

Once, near Manikpore, at a place called Chitra-kut on the E. I. Railway, I alighted from a train, having heard that many Sadhus lived there. About six miles from the station there was a quiet, small, beautiful place at the foot of a hill and by the side of a river. About a mile from the village in a sequestered place and on the bank of a streamlet there dwelt those Sannyasins about whom I had heard. The site was well chosen, for the stillness and

aloofness of it and the beautiful natural environment of it seemed to render it very suitable for undisturbed meditation and probably also for the attainment of that eternal bliss, which was the goal of the Sannyasins there, though about which we have little or no idea. There seemed to be an air of sanctity about the place, which made me hesitant to move forward and break it. It was summer then and very hot during the day, with a hot wind blowing and a scorching sun shining overhead. What attracted my notice first was a fire burning strongly around a frail human being seated erect and motionless, with eyes closed and head and body uncovered in the glaring sun. He looked absolutely engrossed in meditation, and his serene posture indicated that neither the fire nor the sun, nor even anything in the world had any significance to him. Later I learnt from others that he was a Bengalee and a graduate of the Calcutta University. He was doing hard Tapas (Yogic practice) there for some time. What led him to renounce the world and lead that hard life in such an obscure and remote place, nobody could tell, for he was most uncommunicative.

Looking round I found some deep caves dug out in the high embankment. There were some Sadhus also sitting outside, whose spiritual advancement I could not of course gauge, though I was struck by their unassuming ways and unpretentious talks. Unlike the common Sadhus, or rather the professional mendicants posing as Sadhus, who are found in numbers near temples and bathing ghats in towns, these people were least inclined to show off, so much so that when I asked one of them, a very bright and intelligent-looking man, what attraction was there in their life which had made them forgo all the pleasures, happiness and affinities of

worldly existence, if they had got a clue to greater happiness or if they had ever perceived in their lives the reality of an Almighty Force,—he just smiled a little and looked up to my eyes with a deep stare, which seemed to penetrate into my inner self and which made my eyes turn down. But he said nothing. When I looked up again to implore an answer he said in soft tones that what I considered as happiness was but the contrary of it, for it never lasted and it invariably brought misery and dissatisfaction in its wake; and therefore that kind of happiness should have no charm for a wise man. As to my questions regarding himself he said that he had achieved little and was then only on the way, though there was nothing to be impatient for, as life was eternal, and as it must take long to subjugate our mind with its fickleness and its various inclinations to our will. When, finally, with a sympathetic gesture he told me that he was not a great Rishi (a very advanced Yogi) and was, in fact, no better than myself, I was astounded at his modesty and simplicity. Truth was in his eyes, in his voice, in his gestures. I believed what he said; but, there was one great difference between him and me, which struck me at once; and that was that whereas I was still groping in the dark and running after the mirage of unreal ordinary worldly happiness, he had been able to assess the real value of such happiness, and, having therefore discarded the cravings thereof, had put himself on the road to the attainment of some more lasting thing. I could not tell what he would achieve in the end, but I felt from his freedom from insatiable worldly desires that he did not suffer from the pangs of disappointment and dissatisfaction, to which we are prey, and was in the enjoyment of the great happiness of contentment.

He blessed me when I bowed to him and got up.

It was evening now; the setting sun had made the sky crimson. The fire burning round that Bengalee Yogi, who was still seated motionless as before, looked redder. The approach of night had made the place quieter, and as if more solemn. There was but one thought, which wrapt me, as I slowly treaded on the lonely footway leading me back into the ever-same rush and roar of the world, and that was 'Do such people, who realize the unreality of worldly happiness and who renounce the material world to pass their days in isolation and obscurity for meditating on deeper things and for disciplining their body and soul by hard Yogic practices,—do such persevering people become the all-knowing and all-powerful Yogis I was looking for?'

But I was not satisfied; and I have continued my search till now in the course of which I have met several people who have impressed me more or less and I have come to know also a little of their ways and practices. I cannot say which of them were great, for, great men are not very communicative, much less disposed to disclose themselves, as they are not interested in self-propaganda. It is not possible to describe the various people I have met and my experiences in connection therewith in the course of one article, but I shall only write here something about a remarkable man I met in the Himalayas, who impressed me deeply.

Having visited Jumnotri (the source of the Jumna) I was proceeding to Gangotri (the source of the Ganges). I had some companions with me. We stopped for the night at a small *chatti* (a resting-place for pilgrims) some sixteen miles from Uttarkashi. As the evening grew darker a tall, thin-built Sadhu, with a stick in hand and a small

light bundle consisting of a little blanket and perhaps a piece of cloth also under his arm, entered the *chatti*, and looking round selected a corner where he stretched himself. His reserve and exclusiveness attracted my notice, but when I went to him, he seemed almost to resent it. Eventually, however, I succeeded in reconciling him into a conversation during which I learnt that he too was out on pilgrimage like ourselves to the five great sacred places, namely Jumnotri, Gangotri, Trijuginrain, Kedarnath and Badrinath. But he was going very fast doing over thirty miles a day. On my asking him information about Yogis he said there were many, but they were not easily to be seen, as they avoided frequented places. Seeing my intentness, however, he added that there was one practising Hatha-Yoga near Hirsali on the way to Gangotri and I might see him.

All the way till I reached Hirsali I thought of this Hatha-Yogi and felt impatient to meet him. But at Hirsali I found it difficult to find him. Nobody could tell, till I went to the *chattivalla* who said that there was one Sadhu living on the bank of the Ganges down below, but he could not tell whether he was the Hatha-Yogi I was looking for. On the way down to the river was a small temple and near it the ruins of an old building. Going all over the place I found nobody and in great dejection I returned to the *chattivalla* who asked me to go inside the ruins of the building. I went back and entered the broken building with considerable caution. There must have been rather a big building there, parts of which were still standing. From inside a dark small room there came the glow of smouldering fire, which gave me hopes of finding the Sadhu there. But I was afraid of

entering the room, so dark it was. A big log of wood was burning softly and by its side was sitting some human being. I was awe-stricken and did not know what to do when the figure looked round and beckoned me in. Except for a loin-cloth or rather what they call a mere *langoti* not a scrap of cloth covered his fire-burnt, copper-complexioned body. His big eyes were rather reddish and when he looked at me all over I felt running through my body a cold shiver not of fright but of a strange feeling, which probably the presence of the man, I was facing, gave rise to. He was seated on a long piece of plank by the fireside and was occasionally kindling the fire. He had no belongings of his except an old iron pan lying near the fire. I was positively embarrassed at my intrusion and could not speak when, however, he came to my help and began interrogating me about myself. But did I not have more things to ask of him than he of me?

My first question—‘Did he not feel frightfully lonely?’—evidently surprised him. But he said, ‘When a child plays with dolls it thinks it has good company and does not feel lonely, but you, who know the dolls to be lifeless, consider the child to be lonely. Similarly when you are in the company of human beings, you believe you are not alone; but one who is more spiritually advanced thinks that you are very lonely. Human soul is not satisfied with the company of moving human figures and does not feel lonely in their absence.’ It must be true what he said, otherwise how could a man live in that dark pit for days in and days out without a human voice ever echoing from the rugged, smoke-sooted walls of that room, where—within was a lonely soul trying to realize himself. How very determined must he be, what a tremendous will-

power must that frail human figure have inside it,—I thought. But what I marvelled at most was the strength with which his soul must have been attracted away from the common world of ours towards what we know nothing of, but what had kept him supremely content in that hideous environment, and unmindful of the rigours of his daily practices. Hardly when the dawn broke, at midday, and when the sun had set—thrice he had a full dip in the fast-flowing current of the Ganges, whose water was icy cold; his one meal in twenty-four hours consisted of some leaves or sometimes of some potatoes fried on his iron pan; his sleep amounted to about an hour’s inclining with eyes closed against the wall. About the manner of his practice of Hatha-Yoga I could not know, nor did I dare ask, for I felt that to be improper inquisitiveness. I could not, however, help asking him if it was not true that Hatha-Yogis were possessed of miraculous powers. He smiled, nodding affirmatively, but added that while those powers seemed to appeal so much to others they were seldom availed of by Yogis themselves, for they feared that the use of the powers might bring desires and attraction to materialism which were the greatest stumbling blocks on the path of spiritual advancement. Appreciating my curiosity regarding his own self, he said, that he never had an occasion nor the inclination to test if he had acquired any powers; but there was one thing which he had come to realize, and that was, that he would not die unless he himself willed it.

Sitting face to face with that strange man, with a smouldering log of wood separating us, inside the dark ruins of an age-old building, in a none-too-frequented part of the Himalayas, when I heard that confident assertion by the

Yogi, whose countenance flushed up as his lips uttered those words, I confess my hairs stood on ends—I knew not why. All that I instinctively felt was the presence of supernatural greatness, and as I looked at that slim figure, radiant with an unmistakable glow of deep self-confidence, rendered brighter by the light of the fire against the dark background of the room, and heard that strangest of strange things—that he would not die unless he himself willed so—my body shivered. When I recovered and looked up, his eyes were still on me, but his gaze was vacant,

for he seemed to be lost in meditation. His soul which had uttered those words was engrossed in the supreme realization of himself.—What was I then for it to take notice of?

How often have I pondered over those words of the Yogi? How often have I argued within myself about the impossibility of his assertion, and about its being no more than a mere inspired outburst! But never have I been able to shake off my conviction in its truth. What was indeed death to that emancipated soul?

GAUTAMA BUDDHA, THE ENLIGHTENED

BY MRS. JEAN PARK McCracken

When it first came to my attention that the Vedantists were about to celebrate the birthday of Gautama Buddha, although they themselves are not Buddhists, and that they also celebrate the natal anniversary of Jesus Christ, I was happily impressed with that spirit of religious tolerance which reveres all great spiritual teachers, and I was reminded of the Bible verse:

‘How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who bringeth glad tidings of great joy’—as expressing the attitude of the Vedantists towards all these great prophets.

There are no chapters in history which are more noble than those which tell of the coming of the founders of religion, to the men of their time—Isaiah in Jerusalem; Socrates in Athens; Zoroaster in Persia, and Buddha in India.

They relate the new visions of eternal things that come to men through the medium of exalted personalities—one of the noblest of whom was Gautama Buddha.

Although Buddhism has well-nigh died out in Gautama Buddha’s own land, and while corrupt and quiescent in many places, yet it is still sufficiently vital to dominate the lives of hundreds of millions.

This great teacher is conceded to be the chief artificer of Eastern civilization and the contributor of some of its finest features.

Gautama Buddha—a prince—went forth in the bloom of his youth (29) to find a way of escape from the harrowing sorrows of life which seemed to stalk unhindered in the midst of everything that had life.

From his early youth he seems to have brooded over the unavoidable miseries of this earthly existence:—that old age with its attendant decrepitude should in time be upon each; that racking sickness may at any time seize one; and that death would inevitably cut off all present sources of enjoyment.

For weeks he sat plunged in abstraction, revolving the causes of things.

He reflected that being born to this earthly existence subjects man to its evils, and therefore the way of salvation was in escape from birth. But whence came this birth or continued existence? Through a long series of reasoning on intermediate causes he came to the conclusion that 'ignorance' is the primary cause of rebirth and therefore the removal of ignorance would cause rebirth, with all its consequent woes, to cease.

He reasoned that ignorance implied error; error implied limitation; limitation, individuality; individuality, separation, and separation implied birth—a separation from the one Life which was conceived of as a unity. Hence birth is an evil because it is inseparable from ignorance.

Man, he perceived, was a creature of desire, and only the removal of ignorance could lead to the suppression of desire and only the suppression of desire could lead to peace, while only the complete extinction of all desire could free one from rebirth and gain him Nirvana, since, so long as material desires remained one would be magnetized to the place where these desires could be fulfilled.

He had sought with weariness and toil for this secret of life. He wasted time in following wrong roads. He demonstrated to himself the foolishness of many thoughts, but never discouraged he sought until he found and what he found

he gave to all men as a heritage for ever that the way might be easier for them.

Although his search had led him almost to the point of death by the rigours of the austerities he practised, at the eleventh hour his splendid sanity brought him the realization that self-torture was not the way to enlightenment, and as the intuition, which is the gospel of Gautama, dawned upon his mind, he became an Arahāt—an emancipated one,—the Buddha—an enlightened one—seeing clearly the way to put an end to rebirth, and also that his own release from rebirth had come.

I am sure that to fathom Buddha's wonderful scheme of life is worth serious and sympathetic study. Such study would bring us the knowledge of the debt of the Buddha to the philosophy of the Upanishads and of that which is of greater importance to us of the West, the indebtedness of Western thought - of Pythagoras, Plato, Plotinus and Jesus himself to the same sacred source. It is attested by many that an exhaustive and appreciative study of Gautama seems to heighten a supreme devotion to Jesus Christ.

Such was Gautama Buddha!—a majestic character, a rare lover of mankind, a hater of sham, a seeker after the unknown God. His teachings should be known by all those who wish to understand one of the titanic forces of our own day as well as of antiquity.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

SCIENTIFIC FARMING

The *Hindu* in a leading article on 'the Plight of the Country-side' draws attention to the many difficulties under which the agriculturist in India labours. Rural indebtedness, the reform of co-operative credit societies, the establishment of land mortgage banks and above all the devising of measures for increasing production and making agriculture pay are some of the problems discussed. Attention is drawn to certain interesting experiments carried out in the United States of America. A great insurance company which had nearly two million dollars locked up in farm mortgages 'engaged the services of a trained agriculturist as the head of its farm-loan division and commissioned him to put through a programme of development and rehabilitation of these farms. These rehabilitated farms were let out on annual leases at a share-rental basis; tenants were required to follow a scientific crop rotation schedule under the supervision of the company's representatives and the results were recorded. Advertised for sale as "opportunity farms," these were taken up as sound going concerns by the members of the public. Last year the company sold 1,164 such farms, 91 per cent of the purchasers were resident farmers to whom the company gave easy hire-purchase terms. The secret of the success of the company lies in the fact that it has demonstrated to rural communities how scientific farming can be made to pay.' A similar experiment may be tried in this country.

SCIENTIFIC AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In the course of his presidential address at the Indian Science Congress at Benares, Sir Ardeshir Dalal emphasized the mission of Science and Industry and put in a powerful plea for the expenditure of much larger sums of money on scientific and industrial research in this country. 'In Great Britain,' he said 'the responsibility for planning the programmes of research, even when the cost is borne directly by the Government, rests with research councils or committees who are not themselves State servants but distinguished representatives of pure science and industry. It is to be hoped that if any comparable organization is developed in India, there will be a proper representation of scientific men from the universities and corresponding institutions and also of the industries directly concerned. It is of the highest importance that the detailed planning of research should be left entirely in the hands of those who have the requisite specialized knowledge of the problems which require attack. In the British organizations there is no political atmosphere, but of course the responsibility of allocating the necessary funds ultimately rests with the Government.' Various other speakers also emphasized the need for research and drew attention to the important part which science can play in developing the natural resources of this country and thereby help her to take her proper place in the comity of nations.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

BENGAL VAISHNAVISM. By BIPIN CHANDRA PAL. *Published by The Modern Book Agency, 10, College Square, Calcutta. Pp. 174. Price Rs. 2.*

Though Vaishnavism is found in different parts of India, the philosophy of Bengal Vaishnavism has certain distinct features. The definition of Bhakti according to Bengal Vaishnavism is the worship of the Lord, who is the director of all the senses, through the activity of the senses which have been purified and freed from all desire for physical enjoyment. To quote the author: 'The Vaishnava movement in Bengal, initiated by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, not only gave us a new theology of the Absolute or a new philosophy of art or created new forms of beauty through its lyrics,—the richest in the whole body of Bengali literature—but it delivered a new social message, the message of the presence of the Lord in every human individually and collectively in the human society, and applied itself to secure both individual and social uplift.' Herein we have the gist of the new awakening Bengal Vaishnavism has brought about in the life and thought of the people. The entire thought and realizations of the Bengal School of Vaishnavism have been built upon certain scriptural texts called the 'Mahavakyas,' such as the Brahmananda Valli of the Taittiriya Upanishad and the Parama Tattva as described in the Bhagavata. The Bhakti cult centres round the love (as differentiated from lust) of Srimati Radha for Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna is the embodiment of all Rasas or the essence of the senses, and, therefore, Sri Krishna is the one and only Supreme Object of all sense activities.

The book is divided into six chapters. The first two chapters are introductory. In the third chapter a detailed description of the various Rasas and Bhavas is given. Keertana or devotional singing plays an important part in Bhakti Sadhana. An account of the different kinds of Vaishnava lyrics and the special Bhavas they express, together with representative examples, is contained in the next chapter. In the last two chapters the author has many interesting and original things to say regarding the contributions of the Vaishnava movement

to the moral and social life of Bengali people. At the end is appended a short article written by Mr. Pal on the doctrine of incarnation according to the Bengal School of Vaishnavism.

SANSKRIT

VIJNANA DIPIKA. By PADMAPADA-CHARYA. EDITED BY UMESHI MISHRA, M.A., D. Litt. *Published by the Allahabad University. Pp. 45+37. Price Re. 1.*

Padmapada was one of the foremost disciples of Acharya Shankara. His commentary on the Shariraka Bhashya called Panchapadika, stands out as a monumental work on Advaita Vedanta. The present treatise attributed to him discusses the various means for the attainment of the supreme goal of life—the realization of the identity between the individual self and the Universal Self. In tracing the cause of bondage and Samsara the author alludes to the views of a number of differing schools and concludes that though Vasana and Janma, as shown by them, are contributory causes to the bondage of man, it is Karma which is ultimately responsible for the existence of Samsara. So, a complete annihilation of Karma can alone lead man to his cherished goal, the realization of Brahman.

There are two ways to get rid of Karma: Karmabhava, i.e. complete cessation from work, and Phalabhava, which means the absence of any desire for the fruits of actions. Padmapada says that it is the latter that frees man from the bondage of Karma. Karma has to be performed, but without any desire. Thus performed it purifies the heart of the aspirant, endows him with Vairagya and Jnana, and leads him eventually to the state of liberation or Akarma. Free from all bondage he then realizes his identity with Brahman.

The different phases of Karma such as Sanchita, Sanchiyamana and Prarabdha have been discussed at length, and various means of performing Karma without attachment to its results have also been enumerated.

The text consists of seventy-one couplets and a running commentary called Vivritti, which is at once lucid and scholarly, has

been added to the book. A short summary of the text is given in English in the beginning. The printing and get-up are quite satisfactory.

The book, as it comes from the pen of a renowned philosopher of India and deals with some of the most intricate problems of religion and philosophy, will, we hope, be of much interest to the scholarly world.

GUJERATI

Ma Sarada. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Rajkot. Pp. 56. Price 3 As.

It contains a short but beautifully written biographical sketch of Sri Sarada Devi or the Holy Mother, the spiritual consort of Sri Ramakrishna. It also gives some of her illuminating conversations setting forth her teachings.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA'S TOUR

Recently Srīmat Swami Madhavananda, Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission, went on a short preaching tour during which he visited a number of our centres, addressed the public and students at various places and met numerous friends and devotees of the Mission. Leaving Belur Math on March 4, 1941, he reached Midnapore, where he stayed for the night and met some of the friends of the Sevashrama. He next visited Bankura where he reached on the morning of the 5th. Here he delivered two lectures, one in English on "Sri Ramakrishna and Practical Vedānta" on the 5th evening and another in Bengali on "Sri Ramakrishna's Life and Teachings" on the 6th. On the 6th he also visited on invitation the Borstal School and the Amar Kanan, about 13 miles off from the town, and addressed the boys at both the places.

The Swami left Bankura on the 7th morning and reached Patna the same evening, paying a flying visit to the Asansol Ashrama on the way. At Patna he lectured every evening from March 8 to March 11 on various aspects of Sri Ramakrishna's Life and Teachings at the Patna Ashrama, the B. N. College Hall, the Bihar Young Men's Institute and the Ashrama respectively. All the lectures were in English except the last one which was in Bengali and was delivered in a ladies' gathering. A large number of friends and devotees of the Ashrama met the Swami at Patna.

Leaving Patna on the night of the 11th the Swami went to Benares and stopped at the R. K. Mission Home of service for the 12th and the 13th, meeting the important workers and friends. Leaving Benares on the 14th he reached Lucknow the same night after a few hours' visit to the Cawnpore Ashrama on the way. At Lucknow he gave a lecture on Sri Ramakrishna on the 16th and met some important friends. On the same day he also visited the Vidyant Hindu High School and gave a talk to the boys. Returning to Benares the same night he stayed there till the night of the 17th. Here he gave a talk to the workers. From Benares he went to Monghyr, where he stopped till the 19th and met a number of notable persons in connection with the proposed college at Belur.

The Swami left Monghyr on the 20th and arrived at Jasidih the same noon, where he was received by some members of the Vidyapith, Deoghar. From Jasidih he motored to the Vidyapith. The boys of the Vidyapith presented an address to the Swami on the morning of 21st, to which the Swami gave a suitable reply. At Deoghar he met the members of the Local Committee of the Vidyapith and was invited to tea along with the members of the Committee by Rai Bahadur A. N. Das. Afterwards he addressed a public meeting on Sri Ramakrishna in Bengali at the local High School. Leaving Deoghar the same night he returned to the Math on the morning of the 22nd.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH CHARITABLE DISPENSARY, MADRAS

The Math at Madras is a premier institution of the Ramakrishna Order. Since its

inception over forty years ago it has been carrying on various humanitarian activities

in the form of spiritual ministration and social service. The Charitable Dispensary was started as a side-activity of the Math in the year 1925. The report for the year 1940 shows what a large section of the poorer public of Madras derive medical relief from it. The Dispensary provides both for allopathic and homoeopathic treatments. The total number of cases treated during the year was 61,543, of which 12,505 were new and 49,038 repeated ones. 18,795 patients received homocopathic treatment. Cases examined in the laboratory were 149 and the number of surgical operations was 1,335.

The Math popularizes the universal teachings of Vedanta through regular classes and occasional lectures and discourses in various

parts of the city and outside. Two monthly journals, one in English and the other in Tamil, are conducted. Besides, the Math has published a good number of English, Tamil and Telugu books on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda and has translated many Upanishads into English. The Math also undertakes relief activities in the city and outside whenever necessary.

Present Needs of the Dispensary: (1) A permanent endowment fund procuring a monthly income of at least Rs. 350/- for the maintenance of the Dispensary. (2) Suitable donations in kind or cash making available for the Dispensary medical appliances for the surgical, pathological and other departments.

SIND

The birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated at several places in Sind. A largely attended public meeting was held in this connection at the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Karachi, on 2nd March 1941, in which speeches on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna were delivered in English, Sindhi and Hindi. Hyderabad, a cultural centre of Sind, also celebrated the

anniversary on the same day. The occasion was observed at Sukkur by organizing two meetings on the 1st and 2nd of March. Swami Satswarupananda of the Ramakrishna Order addressed both the gatherings on the life and gospel of the Master. Neushahr Feroze, a small town in the District of Nawab Shah, also celebrated the birthday with due observances.

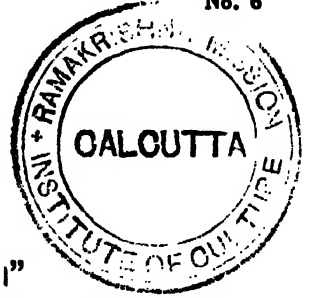


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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

KARMA-YOGA

Sri Ramakrishna: ‘A Sannyasin has to give up all hankerings after lust and gold. He cannot again go after them. One cannot swallow back what one has spat out. If a Sannyasin helps anybody with anything he does not arrogate the virtue of the act to himself. Mercy belongs to God alone. How can a man be the author of mercy? Acts of mercy or charity take place in accordance with the will of Rama. A man of true renunciation relinquishes all desire for enjoyment both in mind and practice.

‘Men of the world require money; they have to maintain their family. They have to earn and make provision for their wives and children. A bird and a Sannyasin do not lay by anything. But when young ones are born a bird gathers and brings food for them with its beaks. Even for it there is then necessity for storing.

‘A man living a household life but endowed with pure devotion performs

his duties without any attachment. All fruits of actions—loss or gain, happiness or misery—he resigns to the Lord, and prays to Him day and night for devotion at His feet. He has no desire for anything else. This is called Nishkama Karma or work without any desire. The works of a Sannyasin also are free from desires. But unlike the householder he does not engage in any worldly activity.

‘If a householder makes charity to anybody without any motive or desire, the good he renders thereby is to none else but to his own self. He serves the Lord who resides in the heart of all. And to have the privilege of serving the Lord is beneficial to the man who serves and not to others. So, by practising charity he does good to his own self and not to anybody else. If a man serves the Lord who dwells in the heart of all—man, animal and insect—and if he does not want any name or fame, or even heaven, or any

return from those whom he serves, his work is truly desireless. Such selfless work does him immense good. This is called Karma-Yoga and constitutes a path for the realization of God. But it is a very difficult path and is not suitable for this iron age.

'So I hold that a man who shows mercy to others, helps the needy, and undertakes similar other works disinterestedly renders good really to himself. It lies only in the power of God to do good to others. He has created the sun and the moon, given father and mother to all beings, and has provided them with fruits, flowers and food. The love and affection that parents bear towards their children have been supplied by Him for the preservation of all living beings. He is the source of the kindness that manifests itself in kind people. He has provided for the protection of the helpless by endowing the beneficent with mercy. He can have a hundred ways to get His will done irrespective of whether you show any mercy or not. His decree can never remain unfulfilled.

'What then is the duty of a man? It is this: He should take refuge in God and pray to Him with all the earnestness of his soul to bless him with His vision and realization.

GOD ALONE IS REAL, EVERYTHING
ELSE UNREAL.

'Shambhu told me, "I have a great desire to set up some hospitals and dispensaries so that there may be some relief for the poor." I replied, "Yes, it is good if you can do it without any personal motive. But it is very difficult for one devoid of sincere devotion to God to be perfectly selfless. Moreover, if you are involved too much in work you are very likely to be caught unawares in the meshes of desires. We

often think, when we undertake a work, that we are doing it quite disinterestedly, but we do not know how the desire for name and fame has already crept in. Moreover, excessive work leaves one no time to think of God and thus makes him forgetful of Him." I told him further, "Shambhu, let me put you a question. If God appears before you what will you ask of Him? Will you ask for some hospitals and dispensaries or for a perpetual vision of Him? Nothing else can attract you if you see Him once."

'Those who build up hospitals and dispensaries and take delight in it are, no doubt, good people. But they belong to a different class. A man of pure devotion wants nothing but God. If he is entangled unavoidably in excessive work, he prays yearningly to the Lord saying, "Lord, have mercy on me and reduce my work. My mind should ever be devoted to Thee; but contrary to this, it is shedding all its energy in useless pursuits, in the thought of worldly things!" People of pure devotion are a class by themselves. Pure devotion can hardly be attained unless one realizes the fact that God alone is real and everything else is unreal, that the nature of the world is fleeting and transitory, while God who has created it is eternal and everlasting.

'Janaka and others carried on work, because, they were commissioned for it.'

SCIENCES AND REALIZATION OF GOD:
WHICH FIRST?

Sri Ramakrishna (to Bankim): 'There are people who think that the realization of God remains unattainable till one acquires the knowledge of scriptures and other sciences.

They believe that the knowledge of the world and its beings and the study of different sciences form the first step towards the realization of God. (All laugh). They hold that God cannot be known unless His creation has been known. What do you say? Which should be known first--sciences or God?

Bankim: 'Yes, we should first gather a fair knowledge about the world. How can we expect to know God unless we know at least a little about this world? One should study and know of the world first.'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'How in the same groove all of you move! But it was God who existed first and then followed the creation. Know Him first and then you can know everything if you like.'

'If you can, by some means or other, manage to have a talk with Jadu Mullick, you can know from him, if you like, how many buildings and garden-houses he possesses and how much Government Paper he has got. Jadu Mullick himself will supply you the information. But if you do not call on and talk to him, or are not allowed access to him by the gatekeepers, how can you get the true information? Everything can be known when He is known. But you will have no inclination then to know of other trivial things. It has been said so in the Vedas also. People talk of the good qualities of a man so long as he is absent from the spot. But as soon as the man makes his appearance all these talks come to an end and the people oblivious of everything else become absorbed in talks with him. Nothing else can then hold their mind.'

'God should be known first and then if you choose you may pay attention to His creation and other things.'

Valmiki was initiated with the Rama-Mantra but he was asked to repeat the word Marâ. Ma means God and râ the world. So, the knowledge of God is ever followed and never preceded by that of the world. If you have the knowledge of one you can have the knowledge of many. One followed by fifty zeros makes a huge number. But omit the one and the zeros lose their value. So it is the one that makes the many. The many always follow and depend on the one. Similarly creation both animate and inanimate occupies a subordinate place to God.

'You are to know God. Why do you trouble yourself so much with the world, its creation and the sciences? You like to eat mango. What necessity is there for you to know how many trees are there in the garden, how many branches the trees have got, and how many leaves are there on the branches? You have come to eat mango and so pay your attention to that. Human life is meant for the realization of God. To forget this and divert the mind to other things is not good. If you have come to eat mango devote yourself solely to that!'

Bankim: 'But how to get the mango?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'Pray to Him with your heart and soul. He will surely listen to you if you are sincere. He might even be pleased to place you in some good company that will render the attainment of your goal easier: Or it may even happen that somebody might come and give you definite direction in the words, "Follow this and you will realize God."'

Bankim: 'Who is he? Spiritual preceptor? He will reserve the good mangoes for himself and offer me only the rejected ones.' (Laughter).

Sri Ramakrishna: 'Why? He gives

to each what is suitable for him. Can the children. For a son weak in health
 rich dishes be digested by all? If a fish and suffering from stomach troubles, she
 is brought to the house the mother does prepares a simple dish. But does she
 not prepare the same rich curry for all love him less for that?

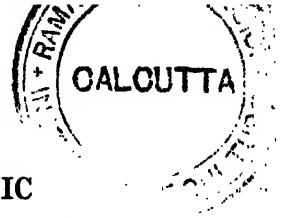
CELESTIAL JOY *

Truth, and celestial Joy,
 And heaven-born Love Thou art,
 Bright Star, whose steady beams
 Our living gloom destroy!
 He solely in whose heart
 Thy pure reflection gleams,
 Can bear the weary weight
 Of human misery!

What rapturous delight
 To sit and meditate
 Upon Thy constancy,
 And feel Thy secret might!
 Only Thy Bhakta knows
 The bliss of Thy embrace:
 Yet only through Thy grace
 Even his rapture grows!

—John Moffitt

* Translated from a Bengali Poem by JOHN MOFFITT.



THE SCIENTIST AND THE MYSTIC

Since the time of the ancient Greek philosophers the West is credited with the possession of the scientific outlook and the 'unchanging' East has in all ages been held up as the custodian of the spiritual treasures gathered by mystics and seers. These popular judgements are, of course, based upon broad generalizations. Plato and Plotinus, Meister Eckhart, Jacob Boehme, and Ruysbroeck of ancient times as well as Emerson, Blake and others of modern times have shed their brilliance appearing in the western firmament and have guided many a soul in the pathway of the spirit. Turning eastwards we find that Kanada, the founder of the Vaisheshika school of philosophy, Varaha-Mihira, the mathematician, the alchemists of Medieval India and others have pursued the study of external nature and the tradition set up by them has been maintained by learned savants such as Dr. P. C. Ray, Sir J. C. Bose, and Sir C. V. Raman. Pure science is the common property of all mankind; it knows no geographical barriers and will continue to have its votaries among all the nations of the world. Pure mysticism likewise would blossom in all climes and in all ages in the hearts of those fortunate souls which the Supreme Spirit has chosen for its own. In spite of the universality which we ascribe to both science and mysticism, we recognize an element of truth in the popular judgement that classifies the outlook of the West as material and that of the East as spiritual. The judgement is not that of a scholar who traces the history of science or mysticism and brings to light the names of

the illustrious men and women who by their devoted labours have advanced the realms of knowledge in these two great departments of human endeavour. With that unerring instinct that helps an individual to detect his neighbour's attitude towards life, the common people of both the hemispheres have passed judgement upon themselves and upon their neighbours on the other side of the globe, each party claiming priority of place to that which it considers peculiarly as its own. What are the premises from which the common man has drawn his conclusion? The common man is not expected to be conversant either with science or mysticism. For a matter of that, the demagogue who denounces religion as the cause of national decay and his equally vociferous opponent who condemns the science laboratory calling it the devil's own workshop only exhibit their ignorance of the achievements of scientists and mystics, who are among the greatest, the noblest and the best flowers of the human race. We admit the common man's ignorance, and we also accept the possibility of his judgement being vitiated by his incapacity to differentiate between the true scientist and the pseudo-scientist and the true mystic and the pseudo-mystic, but we credit the common man with that instinct which finds out the general attitude towards life which large numbers of his neighbours happen to possess. He meets his neighbours in the shrine as well as in the beer-shop, in the market-place as well as in the factory, in the seclusion of his home as well as in the public square where the demagogue attempts to guide the country's

politics. The daily press and the small talk of his neighbours convey to him valuable information. If our common man belongs to one of the materially successful nations, he becomes imbued with a certain amount of racial pride and ascribes all kinds of virtues to his own people tracing them all to the nation's special attitude towards life.

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Men who suffer under political domination, unless their souls are dead, have also their own racial pride that emphasizes the cultural achievements of their own past. The course of world history during the past two or three centuries marks out the nations of Eur-America as the possessors of material wealth and the power that it conveys. The tide may turn to-morrow and put power into the hands of the ancient nations of the East and the infant nations of Africa. But to-day as things are, the power-intoxicated nations of the West claim that science has led them to the peak of prosperity. The higher values of life appear to be forgotten. The discovery of America, the rise of industrialism, and the rapid expansion of trade have been the cause of material prosperity as well as of spiritual decline. The disillusionment is bound to come sooner or later. In the meantime, the common man's judgement that the scientific West is material and the mystical East is spiritual holds good. The true scientist is often as 'other-worldly' as the true mystic when he concentrates his whole attention on the search itself. After the nugget of gold has been discovered, both the scientist and the mystic return to the plane of everyday life and with commendable practicality order the common concerns of life. Both are valuable to human society, for man sharing the characteristics of the angel and the

brute needs sustenance for his soul as well as for his body.

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Words often exaggerate or minimize the true import of the objects which they signify. The natural sciences have appropriated to themselves the name science. Etymologically the word signifies knowledge. When the ancients spoke of grammar, logic, rhetoric, arithmetic, music, geometry and astronomy as the seven terrestrial sciences and civil law, Christian law, practical theology, devotional theology, dogmatic theology, mystic theology, and polemical theology as the seven celestial sciences, they used the word in its original meaning as covering all knowledge. Monks were the founders of the first universities both in the East as well as in the West. When secular power took possession of the centres of learning, less attention was paid to the celestial sciences and the branches of knowledge which were grouped under terrestrial sciences came to be subdivided under the heads of the humanities and the sciences. The original meaning of the word, however, stuck on to it and thus by a mere philological illusion and the natural indolence of humanity men came to believe that the natural sciences covered the ground of all that was to be known and what lay outside their scope was mere speculation not worthy to be classed as true knowledge. The brilliant achievements of the scientists and the extreme conservatism of the theologian confirmed people in the belief that the scientist was the only man of knowledge and the doctor of religion was at best a nincompoop and at worst a sheer fraud.

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The political domination of the West and the consequent cultural domination made the young generation that is

growing up in India to accept the current coin of the West at its face value. It is quite in the fitness of things to pursue the study of the natural sciences and apply them to the development of the resources of the country. But it is entirely wrong and unworthy of the traditions of this great country to confine liberal studies to the narrow circle of the natural sciences and to speak as if there was nothing in heaven and earth beyond the limits covered by them. The world turns to the East and particularly to India for the inner light that will dispel the darkness of materialism and help man to see life in its true perspective. Will the descendants of ancient Rishis pay no heed to the appeal of the world? The securing of political emancipation and the solution of our country's economic problems may loom large before our eyes. These are undoubtedly urgent problems. But is this country's soul so dead as to make it turn a deaf ear to the call of a world that has lost its way in the blind alleys of materialism. By parting ways from secular science Christianity appears to have lost its hold on the intelligentsia of the West. The time seems to be most propitious for Eastern thought to step in and effect a harmony between the 'terrestrial' and the 'celestial' sciences and thereby give fresh vigour to both.

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Let it be remembered that the mystic thought of India has never been mere speculation or mere emotional rapture wholly devoid of intellectual content. Its method was all along something similar to that of modern science. Hypotheses were submitted to rigorous tests. The mind itself constituted the laboratory. A thorough-going discipline of body and mind were considered essential for the practice of Yoga. The details regarding the discipline and the

practices have been handed down through a succession of Gurus and disciples beginning from the hoary past. The tradition is still alive. Even as physical energy and material wealth should be accumulated before one thinks of distributing them, so also the treasures of the spirit should be patiently gathered before a person can qualify himself as a teacher of the eternal wisdom. The feverish frenzy that characterizes the modern man is not the way to achieve the higher things of the spirit; it is not even conducive to higher secular learning. The would-be Yogi as well as the would-be scholar should discipline the surging passions of the mind and make it as calm as a deep mountain-lake, the unruffled surface of which mirrors the blue sky, stars and mountain peaks. It is not easy to establish communion with the eternal source of all knowledge and all power; but it can be done and has to be done by the aspirant who desires to realize the supreme values of life. Take the lives of the great prophets, Muhammad the prophet of Islam spent a long time in the mountains far away from human habitations; Jesus retired into the solitude of the desert; Buddha sat under the Bodhi tree with the firm determination to realize the truth or die in the attempt. Even the busy man who lives in a crowded city can have a secluded room set apart for prayer and holy meditation. Think of the amount of time and effort which a person gives to the mastering of a subject like law or one of the several branches of physical science. Should he not give more time and spend more effort in mastering the laws of the spiritual realm and the supreme science of soul-making?

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Secular learning forms the steps of the ladder that reaches from earth to heaven.

The prophet of Islam exhorted his followers to cultivate learning and the ancient sages of Hinduism were the teachers of both forms of knowledge, the sacred and the secular. Auguste Comte, the founder of the positivistic school of philosophy, spoke of three stages of thinking or philosophizing calling them the theological, metaphysical and the positive. Let us not be misled by his terminology; by theological Comte meant primitive religious and such other faiths which call upon their adherents to accept dogmas and doctrines without submitting them to the light of reason. Vedanta, the science of reality, occupying the highest place in the hierarchy of sciences accepts reason and in doing so accepts all the sciences. Its transcending the limitations of science should be interpreted not as rejection but as renunciation after acceptance and fulfilment. The illustration of the ladder may help us once again. The man who has reached the topmost rung of the ladder cannot be said to have rejected or discarded the lower rungs that helped him to ascend the ladder. His action towards the lower rungs may be more correctly described as acceptance, fulfilment and renunciation. Men that seek the higher have to detach themselves from the lower; there is no other way. One cannot serve both God and Mammon. Comte admirably describes the lower rungs of the ladder of knowledge. The simplest science and therefore the one that should be mastered first is the science of number—Arithmetic and Algebra. These constitute the first philosophy, the lowest and therefore the most fundamental rung in the ladder of knowledge. The second is Geometry which presupposes a knowledge of the laws of number. Rational Mechanics is the next higher rung and it presupposes a knowledge of the first two. Astro-

nomy is the next higher rung. Physics is the step above it. Above it stands Chemistry, for it presupposes a knowledge of Physics. Biology is the next higher rung. Social Physics or Sociology is the highest rung as conceived by Comte. The Upanishadic thinkers and Plato accept all these and proceed a step higher by proclaiming the supreme value of self-knowledge, Atma-Jnana. 'Know thyself' is the dictum that exhorts the aspirant to seek the highest. 'What doth it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?'

* * *

There is a kind of completeness, a consummation in each one of the lower levels. The mathematician would reduce to numbers, forms and formulae all objects, relations and phenomena that he can possibly tackle with the help of his powerful tool. Certain values such as the concept of beauty and phenomena such as the reproduction of living organisms elude his grasp. The physicist too attempts a complete explanation of the riddle of the universe, but stands utterly confused when he finds that the gentle eyes of a comely maid has enough power to upset the gravity of a learned professor. He fails to understand in the light of his chosen science the tremendous power lodged in a pair of eyes. The biologist steps in next and realizes that the activity exhibited by living organisms, transcend the mathematician's abstractions and the various forms of energy formulated by physicists. He discovers the laws of organic life. Like Sir J. C. Bose he may extend the principle of response to stimuli to crystals and metals also. Still the riddle remains unsolved. That species of animal known in his terminology as *homo sapiens* eludes his grasp. Human behaviour can be studied only in the

social group and consequently the sociologist steps into the arena and ably aided by his brother the anthropologist studies the evolution of the social group. The behaviour exhibited by certain individuals known as prophets and seers and the remarkable power exhibited by them in moulding the destinies of individuals and nations are subjects which he cannot honestly tackle. One such prophet appears in the desert regions of Arabia. 'One spark, on a world of what seemed black, unnoticeable sand. But lo the sand proves explosive powder, blazes heaven-high from Delhi to Grenada. Allah-ho-Akbar! There is nothing great but God.' (Swami Rama). Another appears among the priest-ridden ignorant men of Judaea. His people disown and crucify Him. But that is not the end of the episode. The power that arose from Him changes the face of whole continents. The ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome tumble down like a house of cards before this tremendous power. Can the sociologist explain a Muhammad and a Christ? Calling their followers imbeciles or fools or calling the prophets impostors or maniacs does not explain anything. It only exhibits the poverty of thought and bad breeding of the so-called scientist.

* * *

The science of psychology and a branch of it known as psycho-analysis are very much in vogue at the present time. The two brilliant men Jung and Freud with whose names psycho-analysis is associated studied pathological cases and have formulated certain principles underlying the behaviour of demented persons. It is illogical and unscientific to apply the principles they enunciated for sub-human and abnormal tendencies to the elucidation of superhuman and supernormal beha-

viour exhibited by the prophets. The jeweller who knows the worth of precious stones does not class them with pebbles, in spite of the fact that the physicist may see only the same kind of atoms and molecules in both. There is such a thing as value and it cannot be overlooked with impunity. The poet's song, the maiden's eyes, the painter's masterpiece and the words of the prophets are objects possessing value. Their effects are seen, although they themselves elude all efforts of objective analysis. The scientist attempts to grasp the meaning behind the universe by dissection and analysis. The beauty of a perfect rose with the drop of morning dew shining on it like a precious stone ceases to be, the moment the dissecting knife of the scientist touches its soft petals. We can only tell the scientist, 'Step aside and take off thy shoes, friend; knowest thou not that thou standest on holy ground?' The poet himself does not know all the power that is lodged in his burning words. The psycho-analyst may call the poet a mad man. What about the power of those undying words that go down to generations yet unborn and effect a transformation in the lives of thousands of human beings? Would not one like to be that mad poet that gave utterance to those burning words than be the cool-headed scientist that botanized over his mother's grave? Tastes and ideals differ, of course.

* * *

The mind of the artist and the mystic sees things whole and thereby succeeds in grasping the essence and the soul of things. Having grasped the essence of the whole it proceeds to examine the relationship of the parts to that whole and wonders how beautifully Nature or Nature's God has fashioned a thing of beauty, a thing of joy. The mystical

mind has that power known as creative insight. Perception to the mystic is the same thing as creation, reproduction. In life this process becomes *being* as distinguished from *knowing*. The myriad-minded Shakespeare was Othello and also Desdemona. He was Julius Caesar who defied death and also Mark Antony who mourned the loss of a noble friend. When the Prince of Denmark speaks out words of hesitation, we hear the voice of Shakespeare and when Lady Macbeth gives the decisive word urging her husband to action, we catch another phase of that master-mind. Shakespeare created immortal characters because he first became those characters. Something similar seems to be the procedure, if procedure we may call it, of the working of the mystic mind. The great mystic does not merely see truth, he identifies himself with truth, he becomes the truth which he contemplated upon. He does not merely perceive beauty and holiness, but becomes one with them. If we are fortunate to come face to face with a mystic and are sufficiently receptive, we too get some glimpses of the beautiful and the true and effect a transformation in our own lives. The social reformer does good deeds according to his own lights. The mystic becomes goodness itself. His holy contact fires men to perform good deeds. The heavenly compassion of a Buddha still lives in the Buddhist monk whose mission is the relieving of human distress. Water can flow only from a high level to a low level. When we see a disciple's work, do we not see some glimpse of the Master's hand? If we cannot see something at least, we must consider ourselves altogether blind to the higher realities of life.

* * *

If all human beings stand at the level in which the mere biologist sees them,

our fair earth would be nothing better than a bear-garden. The biologist with his pernicious doctrines of 'struggle for existence' and 'survival of the fittest' has already converted the erstwhile smiling fields of Europe into something worse than bear-gardens—we are tempted to say 'hell.' There is nothing wrong in studying the partial truths taught by science, but the mischief comes in when these partial truths are held up as the whole truth and the only truth. When the biologist attempts to explain to us the mystery of the birth of a new life by pointing to the parents of the babe, we refer him to the mathematician who might tell him that if two objects coming together can give rise to one or more other objects which possess the same potentiality of reproduction, then the force that acted through the medium of the two original objects must be classed as one possessing infinite potentiality. The reproductive germ-cell, the biologist himself tells us, is transmitted from parent to child in succession. Tracing backwards we come to the beginning of life. The question as to how life first originated remains unanswered by the biologist. The mystic does not evade the question, he approaches the fountain of all life and finds that love begets life. He gets into communion with the source of all love and brings down to us that potentiality which goes to regenerate a fallen people.

* * *

'Dive deep, brother, the pearl of great price will also be yours,' is the exhortation which the mystic gives to seekers of true wisdom. The power which the mystic holds for transforming men carries conviction to his words: Love, truth, and beauty are not things to be merely heard or thought over. They have to be integrated into life itself. Life alone can touch life. We do not call a man educated, if his learning

is limited to the reading of books. We expect him to have got into touch with a living teacher or teachers. If this is true for secular learning, is it not truer for spiritual wisdom? As we have already shown, it is not a question of merely knowing, but being and becoming. If one half of the thinking world is busy discussing external nature and finding out the relationship between physical objects and their movements, is it not proper that the other half should carry on the important task of making investigations into internal nature and discovering the hidden forces that make the mortal immortal, infuse the eternal essence of beauty into

evanescent objects and assist thought itself to transcend its own limitations? If one half of the thinking world is using its scientific knowledge to forge engines of destruction and to manufacture poison gases for mutual slaughter, should not the other half utilize its mystical knowledge to tap the sources of more abundant life in the form of religion, altruism, poetry and the fine arts and help to regenerate a fallen world? We need not pause for an answer; for the answer is most obvious.

Mayavati

16 April, 1941

THE MESSAGE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

CALCUTTA

BY SACHIVOTTAMA SIR C. P. RAMASWAMY AIYAR, K.C.S.I.,
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[The following is the substance of an address delivered by Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar, Dewan of Travancore, when he presided over a public meeting held at the Victoria Jubilee Town Hall, Trivandrum, under the auspices of the local Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, in order to celebrate the 106th birth anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna.—Ed.]

I had the inestimable privilege of acquaintance with Swami Vivekananda and with the group of people whom he gathered around him for the purpose of propagating the message of Sri Ramakrishna. I am, therefore, happy to associate myself with celebrations designed to bring that great soul back to our memories and to keep alive his recollections.

The message and the gospel of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa is not a message addressed to any group of people or to any race—and one may go further—or to any creed. Speaking for myself, I regard that message as universal in the truest and the justest sense, and I hold also the view that all the great religions of the world have their own part to play in the enlighten-

ment of mankind and in the leading of them on the right path. But there are certain special contributions which the genius of India has made to religious thought and religious endeavour, which thought and endeavour have been roused to a wonderful degree by Sri Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and their disciples. The message of Sri Ramakrishna is a message whose reality and whose urgency at the present moment is one of the fundamental things of to-day and of to-morrow.

It has been one of the peculiar privileges and glories of this ancient, and oftentimes distracted, land that throughout the ages there have come into birth in this country men, not only of the most acute and refined intellect but men who have glorified in

those ideals of renunciation and of dedication, without which no great work and no great man is adequately recognized in India. If to-day we find that the one man whose influence and power for good are widely recognized not only amongst those who are his immediate followers but amongst all classes, if we reflect upon the secret of his greatness and of his influence, if we seek to analyse what Mahatma Gandhi means to India, how can we analyse the position save by granting that he is a man who has tried to typify in his own life and in the pursuit of his own ideals, those dedications, those renunciations and those asceticisms which are the characteristic features of the Indian Yogi and are inherent in the very breath of India and all that is loved in India.

Now Sri Ramakrishna was one of that long line of authentic saints of India who have stood for those ideals of renunciation and dedication. But if he were only that, he would be only one of thousands and tens of thousands, because the Rishis that have flourished in this country, that have made their contribution to the sum total of the spirituality of the world, are manifold as the sands of the sea. But why is it that with a particular poignancy, with a particular affinity, modern India turns to Sri Ramakrishna and the movement for which he stands? It is because, in my humble opinion, he signifies to the fullest possible degree, the one thing in respect of which India has been unique and by reason of which the spirit of India, the mind of India, the effort of India, the aspirations of India, will live for ever, as long as humanity is alive in this distracted globe—and that is the sense of immanence, the sense of divinity and the sense of the universality of human effort and life.

Now we are apt to repeat often, too often, what is called the toleration or the universality of the Hindu faith? Let us consider for a moment why it is that we are entitled to claim in that way? There have been great religions, great revelations; and if we are true disciples of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, if we are true Hindus, if we are true Indians, what we must not forget, what we cannot but admit, and what we should not gainsay at any time is this—that every one of those revelations is authentic. Whether those revelations come from Israelitish channels, through Egypt, through Confucius or through Christ or through Buddha or Ramakrishna, every one of those revelations meant something to the suffering humanity, and was a true gospel. Too often, in the history of the world, this truth has not been borne in mind; and essentially in the human mind there is a natural antithesis which has been most beautifully expressed by one, whom I am proud to call a distant kinsman of mine—I mean Appaiyah Dikshitar. He speaks thus in one of his wonderful verses. 'O Supreme Being, You are formless; and yet, with every thought of mine, with every meditation of mine, I bestow on You a form. O Great and Eternal One, You are beyond description; and yet, with every praise of Thine, with every prayer that I utter, I give unto You the habit or the faculty of being describable. You are without features, You are Omnipresent; and yet, whichever temple I go to, whatever holy place I visit, whichever holy man I essay to reach, in that way and to that extent I give unto You features and a place of residence. Thus in these three several ways, day in and day out, throughout my life I have been guilty of a great sin. May I be pardoned.'

रूपं रूपविषयित्वं भवतो ध्यानेन यत्कल्पितं
स्तुत्यानिर्वचनीयताखिलगुरो दूरीकृता यन्मया ।
ध्यायित्वञ्च निराकृतं भगवतो यत्तीर्थयात्रादिना
ज्ञानतत्त्वं जगदीश तद्विकलता दोषत्रयं मत्कृतं ॥

In that way Appaiyah Dikshitar expressed what I have ventured to call the essential antithesis of the religious life, namely, the impossibility of the human being grasping the Eternal in its essence, and therefore having recourse to various forms, various methods, various prayers, various expedients for reaching out towards the Eternal. And all the religions of the world, all the cults, wise or unwise, cruel or kind, merciful or the reverse, all these are the reachings out of the human mind for something beyond it and above. Therefore in the efforts of a suffering, imperfect and necessarily sinful humanity, in its wormlike crawling towards its goal, every path is worthy of praise, because like that great Roman philosopher we are bound to say that everything that humanity has done is good to humanity. It is in that spirit that Sri Ramakrishna approached the Divine. He, in his life, made no distinction between the Muslim, the Christian and the Hindu, or between the Vedantin and the follower of the Bhakti cult; and that is one of the great glories of the message of Sri Ramakrishna. In other words, he brought into real being those traditions and those beliefs which I hold and contend are parts of the tradition of Hinduism and of Indian life. Where else would it be possible to find one like Buddha, who sought to annihilate formalism, the sacrifice of living beings for the sake of appeasing divine or quasi-divine agencies; who sought to annihilate the arrogance of the priestly class; who sought to make out that wisdom is not the prerogative of birth but is an achievement, a path to be trodden by the lowest as well as by the

highest? And yet that Buddha became, and was recognized, and is recognized to-day, as one of the incarnations of Mahavishnu. So we find that our great singers and seers have throughout, with a few exceptions—exceptions because human history is always unequal and full of travail and full of inconsistencies—proved that the history of India is a history of complete assonance with the inherent longings of the human soul. And Ramakrishna, it may be said, was one of the culminations of that spirit and that outlook.

The other aspect of Sri Ramakrishna's message is its dynamic spirit. It was Swami Vivekananda who said that real Hinduism, well understood, well speculated upon, is not a religion of passivity. It is not a religion of yielding. It is a religion of assertion, the assertion of the dignity of the human soul, 'Tattvamasi.' Which religion has asserted that the suffering sinful humanity has not only the possibilities of reaching the Supreme but is part of the Supreme? That has been the message of this land. Therefore when Ramakrishna and Vivekananda said that manliness, assertion, is and should be the watchword of our faith, they spoke a truth which, I trust, will gather momentum day in and day out, and will make of us real missionaries—missionaries not in the sense of adding convert to convert for the purpose of arithmetic but in the sense that we are convinced of the Truth and we wish to share that conviction, not in a spirit of aggressiveness or antagonism but in the spirit in which a generous man full of treasure goes out and asks others to share that treasure with him, just in the spirit in which it is said in our ancient scriptures that when the break-fast time comes the householder should go out into the street, look north and south and east and west for people

because it is not the Dharma of the Indian to eat alone and by himself but he should share the good things of the world with his Atithis or guests. It is in that capacity that we shall offer our goods to others and ask them to share those goods and share those beliefs, those assertions and those realizations which are parts of our faith and our traditions and our genius.

Sri Ramakrishna was in his life a bundle of contradictions. He was born in a very religious Brahmin family. In Bengal, throughout many centuries, the spirit of Chaitanya has been one of the most potent, the spirit of Chaitanya being the complete annihilation of self in the contemplation of the Ishtadevata (Chosen Ideal). Kabir, Tulsidas and Ramakrishna belong to a great hierarchy of Bhaktas (devotees). Ramakrishna gave up everything in the contemplation of the ineffable Supreme. But in addition to that, and in the spirit of the true Indian tradition, he was not a mere dreamer. He was not a mere venturer into those misty and shadowy regions where reality and non-reality blend in some confusion. He was a descendant of the Vedantins. Vedanta is the most daring, is the most adventurous excursion of the human spirit into the unknown—Vedanta which claims the union of the human soul, the imperfect sinful human soul, with the perfect Supreme; Vedanta which dares to deny all distinction between the Self and non-self. Being a true follower of Vedanta also, in addition to being a true Bhakta, he was able to carve out a message for modern India.

And what is the message of Sri Ramakrishna which has been sublimated, which has been made very practical, which has been made the path for us to tread? That message to India may

be summarized thus: India will be untrue to itself if it gives up its age-long faith in the superiority of the non-material to the material. It is for lack of that faith, it is for not recognizing the truth of that maxim that the modern nations are where they are. Economics, markets, conquests, the empire following the conflict or the conflict following the empire, balance of power—all these slogans which have disfigured the history of Europe during the last one hundred or two hundred years are but abbreviated versions of the doctrine of inherent and almost arrogant selfishness. That selfishness arises because Christian nations have forgotten Christ—Christ, the great communist, the great rebel, the great man who chased money-lenders out of the temple at Jerusalem, the man who pleaded for poverty saying that it is easier for a camel to enter the needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the portals of Heaven, Christ who was thoroughly impractical and an idealist and a dreamer. In spite of what his followers may preach, Christ, it must be remembered, was a true Vedantin. It has been recently shown in one of Sir S. Radhakrishnan's works that Greek thought, Egyptian thought, Palestinian thought and Christian thought have owed a great deal to those underlying philosophical truths and beliefs which are the heritage of the eastern world. It has been forgotten that Christ is an Asiatic, that Buddha too is an Asiatic. And that is why it is yet true to say that light goes from the East, while laws come from the West. When I say this I am not original in any way, because it was many years ago that the saying originated:—*Ex occidente lex ex oriente lux*—'Out of the East came light; out of the West came the laws.' And that is one aspect of the life and message of Sri Rama-

krishna, namely, that behind all human endeavour for advancement there is one danger to be dreaded, one evil to be avoided, one plague to be shunned, and that is the acceptance of grandeur and acquisition of territory or of goods as the sole end of mankind. This is easy to say but difficult to practise. For it is one thing to preach and quite another to practise; but there must be something to preach for people to practise. That is the first message of Sri Ramakrishna.

The second point in his message, I take it, is that it does not matter to what religion you belong, it does not matter in what creed or race you are born, provided you seek to realize something beyond and outside your little self and follow your ideal. It was in some such spirit that the poet Wordsworth said at a time when Europe was not so sophisticated, so aeroplane-ridden or bomb-ridden as it is to-day :—

The world is too much with us; late
and soon

Getting and spending, we lay waste
our powers

Little we see in Nature that is ours?
We have given our hearts away, a
sordid boon.

This sea that bares the bosom to the
moon,

The winds that will be howling at all
hours

And are up-gathered now like sleep-
ing flowers,

For this, for everything, we are out
of tune;

It moves us not—Great God; I'd
rather be

A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn,
So might I, standing on this pleasant
lea,

Have glimpses that would make me
less forlorn;

Have sight of Proteus rising from the
sea;

Or hear old Triton blow this wreathed
horn.

What he said was—If I was given some belief, even if it be in a false God, that is much better than the absence of belief, than that scepticism which envelopes us. It is that aspect of the matter, namely, the absorption in something outside and beyond your little self which is the second message of Sri Ramakrishna.

The last message may be described as the assertion of the manliness, the glory, the might and the significance of India as such. Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda were two of the great apostles of modern India, in the sense that they made us self-respecting, that they made us realize that we have something to give and that we are not mere beggars at the doors of the great races and the nations of the world; and that something we give not in a spirit of churlishness, not in a spirit of patronage, not in a spirit of aloofness, but in a spirit of friendliness and fraternal sharing of spiritual goods.

These three are the messages of Sri Ramakrishna. He lived an unknown life. He was one of the many Bhaktas who are amongst the glories of our race and tradition. There are such Bhaktas to-day. There have been such Bhaktas throughout the history of India. But some Bhaktas, coming into being at critical moments in the history of a nation, are able to infuse into that nation a new spirit, a new spark. And all that Sri Ramakrishna has done is essentially due to his great disciple Swami Vivekananda. In this respect, you will see that all through the ages these great Bhaktas and these great prophets have always been wonderfully fortunate. Putting it crudely, it has been most wonderfully providential that their messages have been sublimated by their disciples. That was the

great good fortune of Buddha. That was the great good fortune of Jesus Christ, who without St. Paul would not have been able to clothe his message in that philosophical garb which we now know as Christianity. Similarly, in the case of Ramakrishna it needed Vivekananda and the Ramakrishna Mission to do that. The most transcendent message was the message of the two combined, namely, that religion is not an escape, that religion is an emergence, that by religion is not meant going away from the world, that it means working amongst the masses in the market, in the hospital, in the refuges of the poverty-stricken, the diseased

and the distressed, working amongst them by self-sacrifice, working social good amongst them and so making it possible for the eschewal of all that is ugly and all that is diseased in the physical body, then in the mental body and then in the spiritual body and making an integral healthy whole, healthy in body, in mind and in spirit. It is that aspect of dynamic social service, social service as a form of Yajna, as a form of prayer, as a form of Tapas—it is that message, that great teaching which constitutes the gospel of Vivekananda as derived from Ramakrishna. It is for that great contribution to human life and thought that we honour Ramakrishna.

ART IN ASIA

BY N. C. MEHTA, I.C.S.

[This article, the substance of which was broadcast from the Lucknow Radio Station, is printed by courtesy of the All-India Radio.—Ed.]

Laurence Binyon delivered a course of six lectures in 1933-34 to the Harvard University, which are recorded in a delightful book, entitled *The Spirit of man in Asian Art*. Here he passes in review the salient features of the arts of India, China, Japan and Iran. Says he, 'Looking on our world as it is, there are moments when one may be provoked to think that the most conspicuous characteristic of mankind is a gift for making a prodigious mess of its affairs, even one might think, an unteachable stupidity, with all the cruelties directly and inevitably springing from that stupidity.' This stupidity or want of an integrated vision is responsible for looking upon Art as something alien to or apart from Life's normal activities.¹

Binyon combines the rare gifts of sound aesthetic judgement and felicitous writing. He goes on to say: 'There is no history of human happiness. Of wars, plagues, and calamities; of crimes, conquests, and adventures; of enactments, of voyages, inventions, and discoveries; of these the pages of historians are full. But of the immense, silent, intangible life behind these resounding efforts and events, how little, after all, they tell us! And yet, if

pictures says: 'The Universe has its only language of gesture, it talks in the voice of pictures and dance. Every object in this world proclaims in the dumb signal of lines and colours the fact that it is not a mere logical abstraction or a mere thing of use, but it is unique in itself, it carries the miracle of its existence. . . .

'People often ask me about the meaning of my pictures. I remain silent even as my pictures are. It is for them to *express* and

¹ Rabindranath Tagore writing in his Chitra-Lipi-reproductions of eighteen of his

there is no written history, there is a record of human happiness, of human joy; the record is man's art. And that record has one great advantage over the history of historians; it is true.'

When Binyon goes on to discourse about the art of Iran, we immediately come to a phase of Asiatic art, at once intimate and familiar to us, for Iran and India have met in fruitful contacts at various periods of their histories in the past. The pictorial art of Iran, deriving its primal impulse from China appears to have matured rapidly and also declined with equal celerity and suddenness, almost because it was precocious and glorified the achievements of its Sasanian heroes who ruled between the third and the seventh centuries A.D. The impact of Islam, while limiting its subject-matter, failed to repress the passionate love of the Iranian for resplendent colour, the garden, the trees, flowers and above all running water. His inborn romanticism asserted itself and we have got some marvellous pages of pictorial splendour by Bihzad Mirak and other celebrities of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

'There is no gross transcript of everyday vision, it is an almost dazzling revelation of a world washed clean, where every object flows like pebbles in transparent water and is made precious to the eye.' The Iranian above all is a

not to explain. They have nothing ulterior behind their own appearance for the thoughts to explore and words to describe and if that appearance carries its ultimate worth then they remain, otherwise they are rejected and forgotten even though they may have some scientific truth or ethical justification. . . .

'Love is kindred to art, it is inexplicable. Duty can be measured by the degree of its benefit, utility by the profit and power it may bring, but art by nothing but itself. There are other factors of life which are visitors that come and go. Art is the guest that comes and remains. The others may be important, but art is inevitable.'

colourist. He places his characters amidst scenes of supreme splendour. Flowers and trees and running streams are all resplendent, picked out in colours of unsurpassed purity and brightness. In sheer accomplishment the pictures can only be compared to their counterparts in poetry and even in carpets, and are superb in sheer artistry. But it is an art, because of its very brilliance and glittering surfaces it has from certain limitations. Practically all that the artist wants to say is explicit on the surface. There is 'no passion, like the Chinese, for great spaces and solitudes where the winds blow out of far horizons.' For the Iranian, as for European artists, man is the centre and dominates the stage. And running through Persian art is a lively sense of drama.

Iranian painting was in great vogue in this country with the rise of the Moghuls to political power at the beginning of the sixteenth century; and like Persian poetry it enjoyed in full measure the prestige and patronage of the court. But the fashion particularly for Iranian painting barely lasted for more than half a century, for Indian traditions proved too strong for this outlandish but exquisite display of *joie de vivre*—of life lived in the noontide of adolescence and Shah Abbas, the contemporary of Jehangir, actually borrowed the services of Bishandas, a painter of the Moghul *atelier* for making a portrait of himself. Such was the renown of the Indian portrait painter, which remains unsurpassed even after the lapse of three centuries and more.

If Indian art, which primarily means the religious art of India, has been significant and of such profound influence over the art and culture of the entire Asian continent, it is because of its unique integrity and instinctive understanding of the unity of life. Roger

Fry is correct in saying that it is an art entirely dedicated to the glory of God, and that it escapes altogether from the influence of propaganda and the desire for prestige and eschews the defects of an official art. What, however, strikes him as pornographic imagery or intense voluptuousness is only a measure of the difficulty that a Western scholar of great sensibility finds in appreciating artistic traditions of India and which was characteristic of the earlier European scholars who appraised too highly 'the incessant repetition of ebullient and pasty forms' of Gandharan sculptures. Binyon rightly remarks that the immense series of Ajanta paintings holds the central place in the pictorial art of the East and that at Ajanta all seems spontaneous and instinctive. . . . 'The ease and mastery of the brushwork are astonishing. The painter seems as if unaware of difficulties. It is like a natural eloquence. And yet there is no callousness such as so often, in a ripe art, comes with the pleasures of mastery.' He goes on to describe the famous fresco at Bagh which consists chiefly of a festive procession of people on horseback, on elephant and on foot. 'Dancers are surrounded by circles of girl musicians. It may seem a strange embellishment of a monastery wall. But in India religion is not something set apart from daily life, but inseparable from existence as the perfume from the flower. . . .' The maturity of the Bagh frescoes is rightly characterized as 'a flowering of the mind in form.' And while it is true that the subject of the Bagh frescoes is not so sublime as the subject-matter of the Buddha's life at Ajanta, there is infinitely greater charm and beauty of the rhythm and natural perception of the human pose and gesture. Above all there is a perfect fusion of the sensuous and the spiritual.

The spiritual significance of life is not emphasized so as to become disdainful of the lovely body and the warm earth; it is felt rather as something which pervades and perfumes all that breathes, like the light touch of wind blowing from we know not where; something which unites and does not divide.' Art has no existence apart from the bodily senses and yet it is a spiritual activity, for the object of it is ultimately the same as that of all human endeavour. Hence Indian scholars have always thought of aesthetic appreciation as something akin to the realization of Brahman, the great Reality. But spirituality as the Indian instinctively understood was not something separate from or opposed to sensuousness. The quest therefore was always for the harmony of spirit and sense. And Indian art therefore strove to express spiritual impulse of man through the sensuous rhythms of form. It was an art which embodied the desires, the exultations and the agonies of the spirit of man, and, to quote the words of William Blake, 'it furnished a means of conversing with paradise.' Binyon refers to the lyrical quality of the tiny paintings of India which were produced in such profusion from the seventeenth till the middle of the nineteenth century. In these pictures 'the line flows over all the accidents of forms like a stream, and refuses to be impeded by them. . . . Is there anything in the art of the world so like a song that sings itself?'

He has rightly emphasized the seminal character of Indian art which migrated to China and dominated for centuries the art of almost the entire Continent, because of the spiritual message that it had to give to the great and ancient civilizations of China and Japan. China, above all, had experimented for centuries in the various media and proved her capacity for

accomplished workmanship, instinctive taste and capacity for impeccable workmanship and sublime ideas. If she, too, came under the sway of Indian Dharma it was because the message of the great Buddha imparted just that ferment and inspiration which enabled the Chinese imagination to flower in the immortal creations of the T'ang period. It was not a question of influences or imitations; it was a case of spiritual conversion. And the Chinese genius rose to its greatest flights in interpreting the message of the Great Master. The charity, the compassion and the repose of the Buddha were translated with the instinctive Chinese sense for design, form and rhythm. The spiritual impulse, which with the Indians was all-pervasive and inseparable from artistic expression, became with the Chinese something more than remote and unearthly. Binyon has rightly contrasted the effects of this meeting between the Indian and Chinese cultures with the evolution of the debased art of the Gandharan period.

In a brilliant analysis of Chinese landscape painting, Binyon brings out the characteristics of Asian art and the spiritual unity of all aesthetic expression in the Asian conception of things *vis-à-vis* the traditions of the West. 'One of the greatest conceptions of Indian art is the image of the Buddha sitting in ecstasy, still as a flame in a windless place, an ecstasy which has consumed the world to thought.

'The attitude of Lao-tze seems to have much in common with the Indian attitude, yet it is, I think, more accessible to our ways of thinking. Indian art and poetry are full of delight in the beauties of this world, because in each glory of sound and sight and smell is found a manifestation of the joy of the Infinite Spirit. But with all that sensitiveness to nature there is no

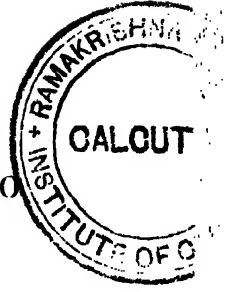
passionate study of nature as a whole. There is no development of pure landscape art, as in China, where there is a deep and abiding sense of the companionship of earth and man. The habit of regarding the world of appearances as illusory is too strong.' How the philosophy of the race affects this artistic expression, is clearly brought out in the Chinese treatment of empty spaces, 'Hollowness, emptiness—these are words, these are ideas, from which our instincts recoil; they are repugnant,' because it is not realized that space is not something like an enclosure but the Akasha, the Infinite, the home of the liberated spirit, where it flows with the flowing of the eternal spirit: the universe is one unbounded whole. This is the inspiration of the landscape art of China. To use the words of Lao-tze, 'Clay is moulded into a vessel; the utility of the vessel depends on its hollow interior. Doors and windows are cut out in order to make a house; the utility of the house depends on the empty spaces. Thus, while the existence of things may be good, it is the non-existent in them which makes them serviceable.' At once we find ourselves seeing things from a fresh angle. . . . It is hard to think of any Western painting in which the empty spaces are made as significant as they are here: one would almost say even more significant than the figures. The intervals seem brimmed with a listening silence. You feel that the artist dwelt on them, so as to draw 'out their eloquence. It is, so to speak, space spiritualized.'

We in this country never cultivated the art of landscape painting as in China or in Japan, for our emotional outlook was essentially different. To the Chinese or the Japanese flowers and birds were not mere pleasurable accessories of human life, but were contemplated as living things of a dignity not

less than that of human beings. The result was something extraordinary, for the world has never seen anything approaching the paintings of woods and streams, mists and vapours, mountains and rivers, birds and flowers, so suggestive, so spiritualized and so alive as those by the Chinese and the Japanese masters. In the hands of these artists a spray of blossom trembling in the wind seemed to be at once an apparition from a world of intenser life and a kind of secret thought unfolding in the heart of man. Here it was no question of mere technical skill, for the result depended primarily on the mental effort and the intellectual or the imaginative grasp of the subject. It was the translation of the Indian conception of contemplation being the first essential in the depiction of the Divine. Here was no elaboration by the busy hand, while the mind remained idle. All must be seen in memory or imagined; then the full mind's conception overbrims into form and tone. The Chinese and the Japanese attitude towards colour was also characteristic and in contrast to that of the Indian artist. The Chinese emphasis was more on form and rhythm. According to a Chinese critic, 'Colouring in a true pictorial sense does not mean a mere application of variegated

pigments. The natural aspect of an object can be beautifully conveyed by ink-colour, if one knows how to produce the required shades.' The Indian, on the other hand, loved the warm and resplendent tones of his palette. Where, however, he surpassed himself was in those tiny uncoloured drawings, depicting some Puranic myth or legend, or showing the heroine in quest of her lover, or in delineating the *Ragamalas*—the pictorial counterparts of musical themes or of seasonal ballads. Here the fluid lines seemed to jet like water from a fountain curving over as it falls. . . . Since art is sensuous, since all it has to convey must be communicated through the senses, the medium of communication is of the first importance. And in the best of these drawings the mood is communicated with no impediment in the utterance, with perfect felicity.

Such was the art of Asia, integrated into a spiritual entity by the same ethical and intellectual outlook towards life. It was an art which instinctively perceived the unity of life and expressed it with an intensity which was natural because it was true and born of the sincerity of the Spirit. Here at any rate was no scope for strife, for the object which it sought was peace, happiness and understanding.



THE PHILOSOPHY OF SRI AUROBINDO

BY PROF. S. K. MAITRA, M.A., Ph.D.

(Concluded from the previous issue)

III

THE PLUNGE INTO IGNORANCE

So far our discussion has been about the nature of the Creative Principle. We have now to deal with the process of Creation. Creation is a plunge of the Spirit into Ignorance. Why, however, should it be necessary for the Spirit to descend into Ignorance for the sake of creation? Why can it not create out of the fulness of its self-consciousness? The Spirit can create, and does indeed create, out of its plenary self-consciousness, remaining throughout perfectly in knowledge. Such creation, in fact, is creation in the upper hemisphere, and represents the crown and apex of the whole creation. Our sages were aware of such a pure creation through complete self-manifestation and called it the greater world beyond the lesser, but they regarded the world in which we men live as a mixed world of light and darkness, of truth and error. The creation of such a world can only be through Ignorance; it cannot be through knowledge. But although it is a plunge into Ignorance, it is a plunge for the purpose of coming back again through the whole gamut of creation to light and knowledge. That is the meaning of the world-process: to come back to light after an initial plunge into darkness or the sea of Inconscience. Immortality and peace and harmony are not given in this world but have to be built up out of death and struggle and discord. The plunge is, indeed, for the sake of giving the world an opportunity of rising out of

ignorance and suffering and weakness into knowledge and bliss and strength. The diving into Ignorance is only for the sake of bringing up on the surface by slow but sure stages the rich treasures of the Superconscient. It is to give man, apparently a hopelessly frail creature, the very picture of helplessness and misery, the seemingly hopeless task of rising to immortality, knowledge and strength.

Creation, therefore, of the world in which we live, is the result of the plunge of the Spirit into Ignorance, but in spite of this plunge, or rather because of it, the created world carries with it the promise of the millennium, the assurance that out of its present hopelessly weak and miserable state it will emerge into one of perfect strength and bliss. It is the realization of this which, as Sri Aurobindo points out, has taken different shapes in different ages—'the perfectibility of man, the perfectibility of society, the Alvar's vision of the descent of Vishnu and the gods upon earth, the city of God, the millennium, the new heaven and earth of the Apocalypse.' It is this which has been through all ages the source of inspiration for all noble efforts and great achievements of man.

THE TRUE NATURE OF IGNORANCE

But the question that now arises is: What is Ignorance? It is not enough to say that the Absolute plunges into Ignorance for the sake of creation. What we have a right to ask is: What is the nature of this Ignorance? How

does Ignorance arise at all? The answer to this question Sri Aurobindo has given in his own inimitable way in the chapter 'The Knowledge and the Ignorance' in the first part of the second volume of *The Life Divine*.

Sri Aurobindo shows that if we look upon Knowledge and Ignorance as fundamentally opposed to each other, as the Vedanta, when it crystallized itself in the systems of the great Acharyas, took them to be, then even if we regard Ignorance as a power of Brahman, there would result no unitary conception of Reality, but rather Reality would be divided hopelessly at its source, and we should have to take shelter under the plea that the ultimate nature of Ignorance is an unfathomable mystery. Escape from this position is only possible if we take Ignorance itself to be Knowledge, no matter how partial and fragmentary and distorted it may be, and further, if we view Ignorance itself to be capable of evolving into Knowledge. What we require is to realize that Consciousness or Knowledge operates in three different ways. At the highest it is Divine Self-Knowledge, which is also Divine All-Knowledge. At the other extreme we have what seems to be a complete negation of knowledge, an 'effective, dynamic, creative Nescience.' In the intermediate process we call it Ignorance which is a sort of half-way house between the Supreme Consciousness and the complete Nescience.

Ignorance, indeed, is nothing else than the power of the Divine Consciousness to partially withhold itself, to check or regulate itself. It is not, then, in any sense a separate Power or separate Will existing by the side of, and independently of, the Divine Power.

It is also capable, without self-annulment, of evolving itself into knowledge. Knowledge is the natural culmination of Ignorance, not a violent change which it undergoes by a complete self-effacement. In fact, as Sri Aurobindo puts it, 'what is happening is that the Ignorance is seeking and preparing to transform itself by a progressive illumination of its darkness into the knowledge that is already contained within it; the cosmic truth manifested in its real essence and figure would by that transformation reveal itself as essence and figure of the supreme omnipresent Reality' (Ibid. Vol. II. Part I. p. 312).

ORIGIN OF IGNORANCE

We have not yet discussed the question of the origin of Ignorance, although we have seen the importance of this question, for all processes in the lower hemisphere are processes through Ignorance. This problem will have to be discussed from the point of view of an integral Oneness as the ultimate truth. The problem, in fact, as Sri Aurobindo puts it, is this: 'How could this manifold ignorance or this narrowly self-limiting and separative knowledge arise and come into action and maintain itself in an absolute Being who must be absolute Consciousness and therefore cannot be subject to Ignorance? How is even an apparent division effectively operated and kept in continuance in the Indivisible?' (Ibid. pp. 413-14).

It will not do, he points out, to say either that Ignorance is cosmic, as some schools of the Vedanta assert, or that it is individual, as some other schools affirm. For in either case, it will destroy the integral Oneness of the Supreme Consciousness. Still less is it open to assert a fundamental difference between the Jivatman and Brahman,

taking the former to be subject to Ignorance and the latter to be totally free from it. We have therefore to say, if we are to maintain the integral oneness of the Supreme Reality, that 'Ignorance must be part of the movement of the One, a development of its consciousness knowingly adopted, to which it is not forcibly subjected but which it uses for its cosmic purpose' (Ibid. p. 415).

But this also does not remove the whole difficulty. How can Ignorance be a part of a movement of knowledge, and what is the cosmic purpose for which Ignorance is employed?

To answer this question, we have to observe that the Absolute is not merely Chit or Consciousness but also Shakti or Power. Chit itself is also Shakti. We may call it Tapas, using the word in the Vedic sense of a conscious force acting upon itself or upon its object—the sense, for instance, in which the Vedas say that the world was created out of Tapas. If we examine our own consciousness, we find that this Tapas, or the energy of the conscious force applying itself to an object, is really the most essential dynamic force that we possess. But in us this dynamism can only work upon two objects, namely, ourselves, that is, the internal world, and others, whether creatures or things, that is, the external world. But in the Absolute reality the operation of this dynamism will be somewhat different. For there is no distinction there between the inner and the outer, between Self and not-self. Moreover, in us only a part of our dynamism is manifested in our voluntary action, the rest being to our mental consciousness either involuntary or subconscious or superconscious, but in the Absolute Reality it is not so, for all is its own indivisible self and all actions are movements of its own indivisible will.

Tapas, therefore, for the Supreme Being, 'is the integral Tapas of an integral consciousness in an indivisible Existence' (Ibid. p. 421).

Now when we further examine our own consciousness, we find that there is an active part of it as well as a passive part of it. But even in the passive part of our consciousness, if we open ourselves sufficiently to what is beyond, we feel the presence of a Power acting upon us, a Power which is transcendental and which works in us for a greater manifestation of knowledge. Thus we see the energising of Tapas both in what we call our active and our passive consciousness.

It is the same with the Absolute. Both its active and its passive consciousness are Tapas. Its active consciousness is that part of it which melts into creation. But that does not represent the whole of its being. The unmelted part of its being is the great reservoir from which proceeds its further acts of creation. We realize this very clearly in our own consciousness. Thus, when we act, there is the whole of our personality standing behind the act. But not the whole of it expresses itself in the action. Only a small fragment of it does so, the rest remaining as a source of potential power, capable of projecting itself at any moment into action. There is therefore a vast gap between the expressed part of our being, which constitutes active consciousness, and the infinitely greater part which is what we call the passive consciousness. The former is a tiny fragment of the latter, an infinitesimal part of the vast treasure-house of unspent energy which is the unexpressed part of our being.

The passive consciousness of Brahman and its active consciousness are, therefore, not two different things; 'they are the same consciousness, the same energy, at one end in a state of

self-reservation, at the other cast into a motion of self-giving and self-deploying, like the stillness of a reservoir and the coursing of the channels which flow from it' (Ibid. p. 425). There is thus not a passive Brahman and an active Brahman, but one Brahman, one Reality which we call passive when it reserves its Tapas and active when its Tapas expresses itself in action, in creation.

We should further note that the activity and passivity of Brahman do not alternate each other, as they do in human consciousness, for if they did, then while creation continued, there would be no passive Brahman in existence, all would be action, and when the universe was dissolved, there would be no active Brahman, everything would lapse into eternal lifeless immobility. For Brahman, therefore, both the active and the passive consciousnesses exist simultaneously.

The Bhagavad-Gita says: 'यस्मात् क्षरमतीतोऽश्मक्वरादपि चोत्तमः' The Supreme Reality transcends both the mobile and the immobile parts of its being. It is aware of both and is not lost in either. Ignorance, therefore, is not a power of the Supreme Being nor does it dwell in Him. Consequently, there cannot be any primeval Ignorance.

But neither is it an inherent characteristic of the multiplicity of souls. For if it were so, none of these souls could ever aspire to rise above Ignorance and come into the presence of Knowledge. It is only when the individual soul is in the superficial layer of consciousness that it is shut out from the larger consciousness which would show its unity with other souls and with the Supreme Being. But it has also open to it the deeper levels of consciousness where the individual soul sees himself in fundamental unity with

other souls and with the whole universe.

The origin of Ignorance must therefore be sought elsewhere. It must be sought, says Sri Aurobindo, 'in some self-absorbed concentration of Tapas, of Conscious Force in action on a separate movement of the Force; to us this takes the appearance of mind identifying itself with the separate movement and identifying itself separately with each of the forms resulting from it' (Ibid. p. 435). The result of this self-absorption of Tapas is 'that it builds a wall of separation which shuts out the consciousness in each form from awareness of its own total self, of other embodied consciousnesses and of universal being.'

But what is the nature of this self-absorption, this self-forgetful concentration? It cannot be the action of the whole being or the whole force of being, for the character of that action is whole knowledge. It must therefore be a partial movement absorbed in a superficial or partial action of consciousness which makes it oblivious of everything that is not included in its formation. Ignorance, therefore, says Sri Aurobindo, 'is Nature's purposeful oblivion of the Self and the All, leaving them aside, putting them behind herself, in order to do solely what she has to do in some outer play of existence' (Ibid. p. 438).

Man by nature is not ignorant. He has the power and potency in him of complete knowledge. It is only because for pragmatic reasons, for purposes of the superficial movements of his life, he lives absorbed in the present moment, that there is erected a wall which shuts him out completely from all knowledge of the future and also from all knowledge of the past, except for that small part of it which memory makes accessible to him. His exist-

ence for the moment is not the whole truth of his being but only a pragmatic truth which holds good for the limited purpose of his superficial life.

Ignorance, therefore, does not create any dualism. It is not something opposed to knowledge, not something which contradicts knowledge. It is a power of knowledge itself, 'a power of knowledge to limit itself, to concentrate itself on the work in hand, an exclusive concentration in practice which does not prevent the full existence and working of the whole conscious being behind, but a working in the conditions chosen and self-imposed on the nature. . . . This power of self-limitation for a particular working, instead of being incompatible with the absolute conscious force of that being, is precisely one of the powers we should expect to exist among the manifold energies of the Infinite' (Ibid. p. 457).

One cannot help being reminded here of a similar attempt made by Bergson to show that the two movements of Reality, one directed towards life, freedom, the other directed towards matter, necessity, are really not two movements but essentially one. But Bergson's critics point out¹ that he has not been able to effect a real union between the two, for he has not succeeded in showing why the free creative activity of the Spirit should reverse its current and move towards Matter. There is nothing in the nature of the Spirit, as conceived by Bergson, which warrants such a reversal of movement.

Here one sees the superiority of Sri Aurobindo's position. By conceiving the ultimate Reality as Consciousness-Force and by showing the need for the self-limitation of this Force for purposes of creation, Sri Aurobindo has been

able to get rid of a difficulty which has proved such a stumbling-block in the system of Bergson.

SPECIAL FORM OF DESCENT OF THE SPIRIT: AVATARA

We have so far discussed the ordinary form of descent of the Spirit, the descent through Ignorance, which is responsible for the creation, as well as the maintenance of the world-process. But the world-process sometimes requires a special form of descent of the Spirit. This is the descent as Avatara which is mentioned in the Bhagavad-Gita. The peculiarity of this descent is that it is a descent in human form of the whole of the Divine Personality. In the fourth chapter of the Gita the nature of this special descent as Avatara and the reason for it have been very clearly stated. The Gita clearly shows (Gita iv. 6) that there is no contradiction in the idea of God taking birth in a human form. On the contrary, it says that no knowledge of God is complete unless there is the knowledge of this kind of Divine birth (iv. 9). Sri Aurobindo has discussed this question of Avatara very fully in his *Essays on the Gita*, a summary of which I have given elsewhere (Vide my article in the *Uttara*, Bhadra 1847). As this paper has already become very lengthy, it is not possible for me to do more than merely state the most salient points in Sri Aurobindo's conception of Avatara. In the first place, Sri Aurobindo says that the upholding of Dharma is not the only object of the descent of the Avatara, for it is not in itself an all-sufficient object, but is only 'the general condition of a higher aim and a more supreme and divine utility.' 'For,' he says, 'there are two aspects of the divine birth; one is a descent, the birth of God in humanity, the God-head

¹ See Mc. Kellar Stewart's *A Critical Exposition of Bergson's Philosophy* p. 117.

manifesting itself in the human form and nature, the eternal Avatar; the other is an ascent, the birth of man into the Godhead, man rising into the divine nature and consciousness, *mādhavam agatah*; it is the being born anew in a second birth of the soul. It is that new birth which Avatarhood and the upholding of the Dharma are intended to serve' (*Essays on the Gita* First Series, p. 216). He continues: 'If there were not this rising of man into the Godhead to be helped by the descent of God into humanity, Avatarhood for the sake of the Dharma would be an otiose phenomenon, since mere Right, mere justice or standards of virtue can always be upheld by the divine omnipotence through its ordinary means, by great men or great movements, by the life and work of sages and kings and religious teachers, without any actual incarnation. The Avatar comes as the manifestation of the divine nature in the human nature, the apocalypse of its Christhood, Krishnahood, Buddhahood, in order that the human nature may by moulding its principle, thought, feeling, action, being on the lines of that Christhood, Krishnahood, Buddhahood transfigure itself into the Divine' (Ibid. p. 217).

For Sri Aurobindo, therefore, the main significance of the conception of Avatara is 'the birth of man into the Godhead,' as he very beautifully puts it, and not merely the preservation of Dharma. The Avatara is born, in his view, in order to show man what he is capable of becoming. It is to give him an ocular demonstration that he can also become God without even leaving his body. Otherwise he thinks there is no necessity for Avatarahood, the ordinary way in which God reveals Himself being quite sufficient for the ordinary processes of the world. 'The

Divine,' says Sri Aurobindo, 'works behind indeed and governs its special manifestation through this outer and imperfect consciousness and will, but is itself secret in the cavern, *guhāyām*, as the Veda puts it, or as the Gita expresses it, "In the heart of all existences the Lord abides turning all existences as if mounted on a machine by Maya." This secret working of the Lord hidden in the heart from the egoistic nature-consciousness through which he works, is God's universal method with creatures. Why then should we suppose that in any form he comes forward into the frontal, the phenomenal consciousness for a more direct and consciously divine action? Obviously, if at all, then to break the veil between himself and humanity which man limited in his own nature could never lift.' (Ibid. p. 225).

This is also what the Gita itself says. Thus Sri Aurobindo points out, 'That the Gita contains as its kernel this second and real object of the Avatarhood, is evident from this passage—

“अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मातुर्षी तनुमाश्रितम् ।

परं भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम् ॥” (ix-11)—

by itself rightly considered; but it becomes much clearer if we take it, not by itself—always the wrong way to deal with the texts of the Gita—but in its right close connection with other passages and with its whole teaching' (Ibid. p. 218).

GNOSTIC BEING

I shall now conclude by giving a brief account of Sri Aurobindo's conception of the Gnostic Being and the Divine Life.

When the Supramental descent takes place, then man will be freed from the limitations of mental consciousness, and the light of knowledge will dawn upon him. In other words, he will become

a Gnostic Being. It must not be supposed, however, that there is any possibility of the whole human race being raised to the supramental level. Sri Aurobindo is very clear on this point (Vide *The Life Divine* Vol. II. Part II. p. 887); what he suggests is nothing so revolutionary and astonishing, but only 'a capacity in the human mentality when it has reached a certain level or a certain point of stress of the evolutionary impetus to press towards a higher plane of consciousness and its embodiment in the being.'

The nature of the Gnostic Being has been so exhaustively dealt with by Sri Aurobindo that it is not possible, within the limits of this paper, to give an adequate idea of all the features of it that he has so beautifully described. I shall therefore content myself by giving one or two extracts from his book which will convey some idea of its nature. Speaking of the relation between the spirit and the body in the case of the Gnostic Being, he says, 'But in the gnostic way of being and living the will of the spirit must directly control and determine the movements and law of the body. For the law of the body arises from the subconscious or inconscient: but in the gnostic being the subconscious will have become conscious and subject to the supramental control, penetrated with its light and action; the basis of inconscience with its obscurity and ambiguity, its obstruction or tardy responses will have been transformed into a lower or superconscience by the supramental emergence' (Ibid. Vol. II. Part II. p. 1056).

What, again, is the nature of the bliss which the Gnostic Being enjoys? Sri Aurobindo characterizes it as follows: 'But in the highest ascents of the spiritual bliss there is not this vehement exaltation and excitement; there is

instead an illimitable intensity of participation in an eternal ecstasy which is founded on the eternal Existence and therefore on a beatific tranquillity of eternal peace. Peace and ecstasy cease to be different and become one. The supermind, reconciling and fusing all differences as well as all contradictions, brings out this unity; a wide calm and a deep delight of all-existence are among its first steps of self-realization, but this calm and this delight rise together, as one state, into an increasing intensity and culminate in the eternal ecstasy, the bliss that is the Infinite' (Ibid. pp. 1064-65).

DIVINE LIFE

With the descent of the Supermind into the Mind, not only will our mental consciousness be transformed into Guosis, but our life itself will be transmuted into a Divine Life, a magnificent picture of which is given in the last chapter of *The Life Divine*. This last chapter is indeed a wonderful ending of a most wonderful book. And in one of the grandest passages of this chapter Sri Aurobindo describes thus the nature of the Divine Life:

'A life of gnostic beings carrying the evolution to a higher supramental status might fitly be characterized as a divine life; for it would be a life in the Divine, a life of the beginnings of a spiritual divine light and power and joy manifested in material nature. That might be described, since it surpasses the mental human level, as a life of spiritual and supramental supermanhood. . . . But what has to emerge is something much more difficult and much more simple; it is a self-realized being, a building of the spiritual self, an intensity and urge of the soul and the deliverance and sovereignty of its light and power and beauty.

—not an egoistic supermanhood seizing on a mental and vital domination over humanity, but the sovereignty of the Spirit over its own instruments, its possession of itself and its possession of life in the power of the spirit, a new consciousness in which humanity itself shall find its own self-exceeding and self-fulfilment by the revelation of the divinity that is striving for birth within it. This is sole true supermanhood and the one real possibility of a step forward in evolutionary Nature' (Ibid. Vol. II. Part II, pp. 1181-88).

JESUS CHRIST AND HIS MESSAGE

BY S. R. DAS GUPTA, M.A., B.L.

[Address delivered on the occasion of the Christmas celebrations (1940) at the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, New Delhi.—Ed.]

At the present crisis in the world's history when the materialism of the West has almost reached its climax, when the Crucified Saviour is being re-crucified with all the barbarity and brutality which human ingenuity can devise and the principles for which he lived and laid down his life on the Cross have been put into cold storage, it seems particularly appropriate that we on this side should, while celebrating his Nativity, take this opportunity of discussing his life and his message. I do not, however, claim to have studied the Christian scriptures with that thoroughness which would entitle me to speak to you with any degree of authority or to tell you anything which you do not already know. I will only try to touch briefly on a few salient points and events of his life and share my thoughts with you in order to find out what I or any one else not belonging to the denominational or doctrinal Christian faith can learn from his life and his message.

The life of Jesus Christ, in order to be properly appreciated, has to be studied against a historical background. To the Hindu mind his advent is a

fulfilment of the message delivered by the Lord Sri Krishna in the Gita that whenever virtue declines and vice triumphs in this world the Lord incarnates himself in human form so that there may be a rehabilitation of his kingdom on earth. A close examination of the lives of almost all prophets establishes the fundamental truth of this principle, and from this point of view the birth of Jesus may be said to have been a historical necessity. The great Roman Empire which wielded power and suzerainty over a large part of the world in those days had fallen from the highest pinnacles of glory to the lowest depths of degradation. Religion at that time was at a discount and a premium was put upon all kinds of the most abominable vice. The royal courts set an example of debauchery, cruelty and the most horrible and unspeakable orgies which have ever disfigured the pages of history. In the language of the historian Tacitus, 'In Rome all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world found their centre and became popular.' The result was that the royal courts in Rome became a byword of infamy and

immorality, and the common people, as usual, were only too happy to imitate the example set by the highest in the land. In Judea, Syria, Palestine were reproduced faithfully the conditions then prevailing in Roman society. Corruption, debauchery, harlotry and vices of all kinds found a ready home, and in matters of religion the hypocrisy and sham that prevailed are brought home to us in the accounts of the Pharisees and the Sadducees in the New Testament.

It was in this eventful period of the world's history that God thought it fit to send down His beloved son in order that He might once again lead His people along the true path and deliver them from the morass into which they had fallen, and which would only have the effect of leading them on to complete destruction and annihilation. It is a remarkable fact that before coming into this world God invariably gives a warning of His arrival,—a thing which we find to be true in the lives of most of the prophets from the earliest times downwards. When he entered the womb of Mary to be born as the son of Joseph who wanted to 'put her away privily' because of shame, the Lord appeared unto him in a dream and apprised him of the real situation, telling him that the son who would be born to him was to be called JESUS. And so it happened. The events that took place after the birth of Jesus bear an almost uncanny resemblance to those that occurred after the birth of Sri Krishna. All Hindus are aware of the troubles through which the child Krishna and his parents had to pass, how the wicked king Kamsa who had been forewarned of his impending death at the hands of Sri Krishna had determined to take his life, how the Lord appeared to Vasudeva in a dream and instructed him to remove the child to

Brindavan, how the baby was then transported at dead of night to Brindavan and smuggled into the house of the cowherd Nanda, to be tended by his wife Yashoda. Substitute Herod for Kamsa and Egypt for Brindavan and you have a repetition of the incident almost to the minutest details. We read in St. Matthew of the Lord appearing before Joseph in a dream and telling him to flee to Egypt with his family in order to save the newly born child from the wrath of Herod, and of how Joseph actually fled to Egypt and Herod massacred all children below two years of age, etc. It is rather interesting to note that the other three Gospels besides St. Matthew make no mention of these events, not even St. Luke who claims to write with knowledge of contemporary events; but no great importance need be attached to that.

After this we do not hear very much about the activities of Jesus except that he was found to be a very precocious child who was gifted with a fund of wisdom which could only be characterized as supernatural. The most abstruse problems of theology which defied the brains of the wisest men in those days were solved by him with an amount of clarity which left them wondering. 'And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers' (Luke).

From the age of twelve until about the age of thirty-two when he emerged into the world we do not hear anything about him. The most diligent researches into history have failed to penetrate the veil that shrouds this period of his life. To me it seems as if this was his period of preparation, the period of Sadhana and Tapasya, the period of training for his ultimate emergence into the world like an incendiary bomb which would set the whole world on fire and in the end revolutionize it and change it

out of shape. When we find him coming out we see him undergoing the last stage of his Sadhana in the shape of initiation at the hands of John the Baptist who anointed him with the holy water of the Jordan, to be followed by a message from on high, 'This is My beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.'

Thus equipped he comes out to deliver the message of his Heavenly Father. But he was not still free from his trials and tribulations. The temptations thrown in his way by Satan and his final overcoming of those temptations remind us of similar experiences in the lives of most of the world's teachers. The Hindu Shastras speak of similar temptations thrown in the way of Nachiketa who wanted to learn and realize the supreme truth, and in Buddhistic theology we read of an exactly similar experience in the life of Buddha, when Mara, the god of Evil, tried to make him deviate from the path which leads to ultimate Nirvana, and had to admit defeat. Even coming down to our own times we read of similar experiences in the life of Sri Ramakrishna who spurned at all temptations thrown in his way by Mathur Babu and Lachminarayan Marwari. This to my mind is symbolical of the great truth that no one who cannot renounce the pleasures and joys of this world can ever hope to attain the highest realization.

After this Jesus started delivering his message to the world, and the question now arises as to what that fundamental message was. To my mind the essence of his preaching resolves itself into this basic precept that the aim of all human life is to realize the divinity which is latent in every individual. 'The kingdom of God is within you,' he said, and the first and foremost duty of man is to enter that kingdom in order that

he may enjoy everlasting peace and happiness. In Chapter 12 of St. Mark this is made clear in language which leaves no ambiguity about it:

'And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; this is the first commandment.' And he goes on to say that the only way to achieve this consummation is through renunciation. So long as there is attachment to worldly things the kingdom of heaven will only remain a distant vision and a dream which can never be realized. 'Sell all thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven.' 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.'

'Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house or parents or brethren or wife or children for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in the present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.'

Therefore all forms of worldly attachment had to be renounced. It has to be noticed that Jesus Christ was a Sannyasin who had nothing in the world to call his own and only lived in an ecstasy of communion with God Himself. 'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.' He was himself a shining example of the precept which he preached: 'Take no thought of the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself,'—an advice which can only be given by one who has shaken off the slightest vestige of attachment for the things of this earth. But then it would be wrong to suppose that Jesus wanted all men to be Sannyasins. He knew that all people

cannot be put into one mould and that among his followers there would be Sannyasins like himself who renouncing all would take upon themselves the task of spreading his gospel far and wide and also householders who would realize God by following his precepts. He therefore laid down for each of these classes,—at least that is how I read the Bible,—a separate code of conduct so that each might progress towards God-realization in his own particular way. For the householders he lays down a code of conduct which tells them to repent for their sins, to obey their parents, warns them against stealing and against bearing false witness, against adultery even in thought, against all kinds of hypocrisy which was characteristic in those days of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. 'Blessed are the pure in heart,' says he, 'for they shall see God.' It is this purity of heart on which the greatest stress has been laid. The heart is the source and the fountain of all our actions, and if the heart is not pure our outward actions and words are of no consequence, whatever we may do. He puts no stress on external observances which to him are of no value, 'for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts . . . things which defile a man.' It is exactly the same sentiment which finds an echo in Sri Ramakrishna's words, '*Man mukh ek kara*,'—to be sincere in word, thought and deed, which alone can confer a passport to the eternal happiness of God's kingdom.

His second commandment was, 'Love thy neighbour as thyself.' 'If a man smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the left also,' and so on. Although the reason for this tolerance and forbearance has not been expressed by him in so many words, the Hindu mind finds it easy to follow. '*Sarva bhute Narayana*'—the same divinity

which dwells in me dwells in my neighbour also and if in return for a tooth or an eye I do him a greater injury it is not the other person whom I am injuring but I harm myself because I injure the same divinity which is within both of us.

Again in another passage he gives us some idea of his concept of the kingdom of God.

'Suffer little children to come unto me for of such is the kingdom of God.'

And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them.

And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.'

The greatest stress is here laid on humility like that of a little child. A child is sincere, trustful, humble, and man must also possess all these qualities in order to qualify himself for God's kingdom. As Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'One who realizes the divinity within him becomes like a child who has no strong attachments to anything.' It is this faith of a child, absolute unreserving faith which is required. And the virtue of this faith is extolled in these words:

'Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.'

It is this supreme virtue of faith which enables St. Peter to walk on the sea to meet the Master.

'But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried, saying, Lord, save me.'

And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him and

said unto him, O Thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.'

An exactly similar incident is related in the Buddhist Jatakas of a lay disciple of the Master when he was living in Jetavana who had to cross the river Aciravati to meet the Enlightened One and not finding a boat on the shore walked across the river meditating on the Lord Buddha. When reaching half way he saw waves, his ecstasy in meditating on the Buddha became less and his feet began to sink, but he again strengthened his ecstasy in meditating on the Buddha, and reached Jetavana. It is this faith which moves mountains and makes dry ground of oceans and rivers that enabled the sick, the lepers and the palsied to be cured, and the dead to come to life again, at the hands of Jesus.

Another virtue which has to be cultivated for attaining the kingdom of heaven, and which has been mentioned before, is humility. 'Blessed are the poor in spirit for their's is the kingdom of heaven.' He himself is a living example of this humility so much so that before the Last Supper we find him washing the feet of his own disciples with towel and water. And he extols the virtue of humility in these words, 'Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.'

And he finishes up his exhortations with this final admonition:

'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your father which is in heaven is perfect.'

Having given these injunctions to his lay disciples he also prepared his Sannyasin disciples for their great work. Jesus knew that after him this small band of people would go out to the four corners of the earth to spread his

gospel for the ultimate redemption of mankind, and he prepared them accordingly. It is a remarkable fact that all the prophets on this earth have prepared a small and select band of disciples who renouncing all worldly possessions and attachments have devoted themselves to preaching the glad tidings after the departure of their beloved Masters. Buddha, Chaitanya, Ramakrishna,—to name only a few,—can be cited as examples of those whose monastic disciples spread the message of their Masters far and wide. In the same way Jesus Christ prepared a small and select band of men who after his departure would renounce everything and spread his gospel in all directions. They were people selected from very humble walks of life,—fishermen mostly who plied their nets in the Sea of Galilee,—but he prepared them to become fishers of men. To them he only preached the great virtue of renunciation and of not having any thoughts or worries about living and eating and sleeping. Everything must be sacrificed unreservedly for the sake of the Higher Life. Not for them to lay up treasures upon earth which thieves steal and moth and dust corrupt but to lay up treasures in heaven. He impresses on them the supremacy of the eternal life as compared to the transitory benefits of the world. To gain the whole world and lose one's own soul is the height of foolishness. He tells them that no one can serve God and Mammon. He gives them an injunction not to take any thought for their life and what they shall eat or drink, nor for their body or what they shall put on. Was not the life more than meat and the body than raiment? They had only to look at the fowls of the air who never sowed nor reaped nor gathered into barns but were cared for by the Heavenly Father; and were they not better

than those? What necessity had they to think of raiment? Were not the lilies of the field who did neither toil nor spin more glorious than Solomon with all his riches? And if God chose to dress in that fashion the grass of the field which would be cast into the oven the next day, would He not do very much more for them in order that they might be fed and clothed? Did He not know what their needs would be? Therefore his injunction was that without caring for these things they should first seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things would be added unto them, even without their caring for the morrow. He warns them against accumulation of property of any kind:

‘Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses;

Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves; for the workman is worthy of his meat.’

It was a very hard life for which he was preparing them. When one of them wanted to go back for a short time in order to bury his father who had just died, he stopped him saying, ‘Let the dead bury the dead.’ For them there was no looking back or going half way. All worldly ties had to be cut asunder and the only tie that would remain would be with God, to whose will there must be a complete and unconditional surrender. It was only after they had passed through this school of rigorous discipline that they would be qualified to become torch-bearers of the gospel of Christ in lands and climes which had become Godless.

It is interesting to compare these injunctions of Jesus Christ with the Noble Eightfold Path laid down by Buddha for the attainment of salvation, viz. right views, right aspiration, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right endeavour, right watchfulness and

right meditation. This was the path, ‘of which the Tathagata has gained perfect knowledge, which produces insight and knowledge, and conduces to tranquillity, to supernatural faculty, to complete enlightenment, to Nirvana.’

A question is commonly asked as to whether this kingdom of heaven which Jesus Christ visualized refers to the present or to some future existence. Although there are passages in which he speaks of the ‘world to come,’ it is permissible to assert that the advent of God’s kingdom even in one’s present existence is not by any means ruled out. As one Biblical writer puts it, ‘the future has become present and the present is projected into the future. The future salvation has become for us present, and yet has not ceased to be future.’ The fact that immediately before the advent of Jesus we find St. John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ‘Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,’—a sentence which is later on repeated by Jesus himself,—is a sufficient warrant for assuming that the words ‘Thy kingdom come’ in the Lord’s prayer did not refer to anything to be realized in some incomprehensible distant future but a blessing to be gained in this life itself.

The one great quality in the character of Jesus, which also strikes us as the most prominent, is his infinite love and unbounded mercy. This love and mercy he exhibited towards all, and throughout the New Testament we find him showering his grace upon all and sundry who had faith in him. Even the sinners need have no despair; if they repented and their repentance was genuine God’s mercy would be on them, as exemplified in the parable of the Prodigal Son. ‘Hate the sin but not the sinner’ was his injunction; and when a multitude which consisted even

of some of his own followers wanted to stone a sinner to death he stopped them with the admonition, 'He that is without sin amongst you, let him cast the first stone.' We find him fondling little children, feeling compassion for the lowly, the diseased, the outcast and the despised, and his kindness was showered upon all equally. He feels compassion for the multitude who come to listen to him because they are hungry and he sees that they are properly fed before they leave him. This kindness of Jesus is only symbolical of the kindness of the Heavenly Father, as illustrated in the parable of the lost sheep, and this is a quality which all men have been asked to cultivate. It is not to be a passive quality but an active dynamic philanthropy like that of the Good Samaritan. And the service of God through the service of suffering humanity is also envisaged in the Bible:

'I was hungered and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in:

'In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'

In spite of his unbounded love Jesus could be stern also. He had no use for hypocrisy in any form. The 23rd chapter of St. Matthew contains imprecations and curses upon the Pharisees and the Sadducees, threatening them with hell fire and wailing and gnashing of teeth,—in language which leaves one in no doubt as to the feelings which prompted them. But to the faithful, to the sincere, to the true believer, his heart was ever open and his benevolence unstinted. Even the sinner Mary Magdalene, out of whom he drove out seven devils, was not considered to be unworthy of his grace,—an act of supreme love of which we find a parallel in Buddha's deliver-

ance of the fallen woman Ambapali, and of Sri Ramakrishna's ecstatic trances at the sight of the women of the streets whom he regarded as manifestations of the Divine Mother in another form. Even in the midst of his trials and adversities his charity and benevolence towards suffering humanity did not wane even by a tittle. His love for his disciples and their love for him forms one of the most ennobling episodes in the New Testament; so much so that when Judas Iscariot in a fit of temptation betrayed him for thirty pieces of silver, he was seized with such overpowering repentance that he immediately went out and hanged himself. Of the sorrows and sufferings of this world he had his full share. Poverty, contempt, treachery of friends, denunciation by enemies, betrayal by a close disciple,—all these and a great deal more, culminating in the trial, the crown of thorns, and the crucifixion, fell to his lot. And even he sometimes found the burden a little hard to bear, so much so that before the great betrayal we find him in the garden of Gethsemane, praying to God in utter exhaustion of body and anguish of soul:

'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will but as Thou wilt.'

But in spite of all this we find him giving of his abundance of mercy to all. When on the Cross in an agony of despair he cried out, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?' we find him at the same time praying for his enemies and those who crucified him, 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do,'—a living and shining example of putting into actual practice his own precept:

'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate

you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.'

And in the plenitude of his mercy he takes the sins of the world upon his own shoulders and makes the supreme atonement on the Cross, leaving for us those words of hope which have been ringing throughout the world through the passage of centuries:

'Come to me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.'

The Hindu hears in this an echo of the words of the Lord in the Gita, 'Sarva dharmān parityajya māmekam sharanam braja.'

The next incident, and the last, in the life of Jesus Christ which I will discuss here is the Resurrection. A good deal of controversial literature has grown up around this episode and I do not propose to indulge in any scientific and analytical reasoning in regard to this subject, although even without entering into this controversy it may be said that it has stood the test of rationalistic criticism. To me, however, it symbolizes a resurrection of the human soul from the bondages of this earth towards the life infinite. 'I am the Resurrection and the Life' said the Lord. As soon as man realizes his oneness with God he shakes off all mundane attachments and resurrects himself to a realm of infinite bliss and everlasting happiness. And that is the grand finale and the great consummation which should be the aim and ambition of every one of us to achieve in this life, so that it may not be said of us later:

'I piped unto ye and ye have not danced; I mourned unto ye and ye have not lamented.'

I am afraid I have taken more time than was allotted to me or than I intended to take and I must therefore now bring my remarks to a close. Although the ministry of Jesus covered only a period of about two years, the subject is so vast and complex and withal so engrossing that it is difficult to do even the barest justice to it in a brief compass. The profoundest scholars in the world, the most learned theologians and divines have bestowed all their learning and scholarship in expositions of the life and teachings of the great Saviour; but it may be said, without meaning the slightest disparagement of their efforts, that they have only been able to touch the fringe of the subject. He is a remarkable and harmonious blend of Jnana, Karma and Bhakti, which in more recent years found such a glorious embodiment in Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. I will only conclude by saying that amid the shifting sands of time the majestic figure of the Prince of Peace still shines out in all its resplendent glory, beckoning to all human beings to follow the true path, but man heeds him not. The passage of two thousand years has not dimmed the effulgence of his countenance or lessened the value and universality of his teachings from which millions of weary souls still derive inspiration and consolation. May he on this day shower his choicest blessings on us all; may he usher in an era of peace on earth and good will among men; and in the sublime language of the Vedic seers, with which I will end this short discourse, may he in his abundant mercy lead us from the unreal unto the real, from darkness unto light, and from death unto immortality. Amen.

SWAMI YOGANANDA

BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

At the time when Sri Ramakrishna was attracting devotees—old and young—to the temple garden at Dakshineswar, a young man of eighteen, belonging to a neighbouring family, came to the garden of Rani Rasmani for a few consecutive days to see Sri Ramakrishna. The boy looked younger for his age and was cherubic in appearance. He was of a greatly religious disposition, and a divine purity beamed through his face. The boy heard about Sri Ramakrishna and felt interested to see the saint. But he was shy by nature and as such could not find out Sri Ramakrishna, though he was coming to Dakshineswar repeatedly. One day he saw a crowd in a room in the precincts of the temple and thought that might be the place where Sri Ramakrishna was staying. He went near but stood outside. At this time Sri Ramakrishna asked a man to bring all those who were outside within the room. The man found only a boy and brought him inside and offered him a seat. When the conversation ended and all went away, Sri Ramakrishna came to the boy and very lovingly enquired about his whereabouts.

The name of the boy was Yogindranath Choudhury. Sri Ramakrishna was delighted to know that the boy was the son of Nabin Chandra Choudhury, his old acquaintance.

Yogindra belonged to the Choudhury family of Dakshineswar. His ancestors were very aristocratic and prosperous, but his parents became poor. Yogin's father was a very orthodox Brahmin and performed many religious festivals. During the period of his Sadhana Sri Ramakrishna sometimes attended these

festivals, and thus was known to the family.

Yogin was born in the year 1267 of the Bengali Era. From his boyhood he was of contemplative temperament. Even while at play with his companions, suddenly he would grow pensive, stop play and look listlessly at the azure sky. He would feel he did not belong to this earth, he had come from somewhere in some other plane of existence, and those who were near about him were not really his kith and kin.

He was simple in his habits and never hankered after any luxury. He was a bit reserve and taciturn by nature. This prevented his friends from being very free with him. But he commanded love and even respect from all.

After he was given the sacred thread, he though very young, spent much time in meditation and worship. While performing worship of the family deity, now and then he would become deeply absorbed.

Yogin was about sixteen or seventeen when he met Sri Ramakrishna for the first time. He was then studying for the Entrance Examination. At the very first meeting Sri Ramakrishna recognized the spiritual potentiality of the boy and advised him to come to him now and then. Yogin was charmed with the warmth and cordiality with which he was received. And he began to repeat his visit to Sri Ramakrishna as often as he could.

To the people of Dakshineswar Sri Ramakrishna was known as an 'eccentric Brahmin.' They had no idea that the 'eccentricity' in the behaviour of Sri Ramakrishna was due

to his God-realization. The orthodox section looked upon Sri Ramakrishna with suspicion as regards his strictly observing caste rules etc. For people from Calcutta flocked round him, and those were the days when many people in that city openly defied the customs and traditions of Hinduism. As such Yogin did not dare come to Sri Ramakrishna freely, for he was afraid there would be objections from his parents if they knew about it. So he began to pay visits to Sri Ramakrishna stealthily.

But love like murder will out. Soon it was known that Yogin was very much devoted to Sri Ramakrishna and spent most of his time with him. Yogin's friends and companions began to taunt and ridicule him for that. Of a quiet nature as Yogin was, he would meet all opposition with a silent smile. Yogin's parents were perturbed to see him indifferent to his studies and so much under the influence of Sri Ramakrishna. But they did not like to interfere with him directly, as they thought it would be of no avail.

Yogin thought that the continuance of studies was useless, for he had no worldly ambition. But just to help the parents, who were in straitened circumstances, he went to Cawnpore in search of some job. He tried for a few months, but could not get any employment. So he devoted his ample leisure to meditation and spiritual practices. Yogin shunned company. He liked to live alone with his thoughts. He spoke as little as possible. His movements and behaviour were unusual. The uncle of Yogin, with whom he stayed at Cawnpore, got alarmed lest Yogin go off his head. He wrote to the father of Yogin all about him and suggested marriage as the only remedy; for that might create in Yogin an interest in worldly things.

Yogin knew nothing about this. He

got information that some one was ill at home, and thinking it might be his mother, to whom he was greatly devoted, Yogin hurried to Dakshineswar. But to his great dismay he found that the information he got was wrong—it was simply a pretext to bring him home, where his marriage was arranged. Yogin was in a fix. He was against marriage, for that would interfere with his religious life. His great desire was to live a life of renunciation and devote all his time and energy to the realization of God, but now there was a conspiracy to frustrate his noble resolve.

Yogin was too gentle to be able to resist the wishes of his parents—specially of his mother, and in spite of himself he consented to marry. Yogin's parents wrongly thought that marriage would turn the mind of Yogin to worldly things. But the case was just the reverse. The fact that his resolve of living a celibate life had been frustrated weighed so heavily on Yogin's mind that he felt miserable over it. He became moody and brooded day and night over his mistake. He would not like even to go to Sri Ramakrishna to whom he was once so attached. No, he would not show his face to Sri Ramakrishna, who had high expectation about the spiritual future of Yogin and would be sorely disappointed to learn that Yogin had falsified all his hopes by his act of marriage.

The news of all that had happened with regard to his beloved Yogin reached Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna sent information again and again to Yogin to come and see him. But Yogin was reluctant to come. Thereupon Sri Ramakrishna told a friend of Yogin, 'Yogin once took some money from me. It is strange that he has not returned the money, nor has he given me any account of that!' When Yogin heard

of this, his feelings were greatly wounded. He remembered that Sri Ramakrishna had given him a small sum to make some purchases for Sri Ramakrishna, before he left for Cawnpore, and a small balance of that remained with him.⁴ But because of his marriage he felt ashamed to go to Sri Ramakrishna and therefore could not return the balance. At the remarks of Sri Ramakrishna, however, he was so aggrieved that he took the earliest opportunity to return the money and at the same time he thought that would be his last visit to Sri Ramakrishna.

Sri Ramakrishna was sitting on his cot with his wearing cloth on his lap, when Yogin came to see him. Like a child putting his cloth under his arm-pit he ran to receive Yogin as soon as he saw him. Sri Ramakrishna was beside himself with joy at the coming of Yogin. And the first thing he said to Yogin was: 'What harm if you have married? Marriage will never be an obstacle to your spiritual life. Hundreds of marriages will never interfere with your spiritual progress, if God is gracious. One day bring your wife here. I shall so change her mind that instead of an obstacle she will be a great help to you.'

A dead weight was removed, as it were, from his heart, as Yogin heard Sri Ramakrishna utter these words in an ecstatic mood. Yogin saw light where it was all darkness for him. He was filled with new hope and encouragement. While taking leave of Sri Ramakrishna, Yogin raised the topic of the balance of money which he was to return, but to this Sri Ramakrishna was supremely indifferent. Yogin understood that Sri Ramakrishna's remark about the money was simply an excuse to bring Yogin to him. Now his love and admiration for Sri Ramakrishna became all the more great, and he again began to repeat his visits to Dakshineswar.

Even after the marriage Yogin was indifferent to the worldly affairs as before. This was a great disappointment to his parents who thought of binding Yogin to the world through the tie of wedlock. Once the mother of Yogin rebuked him for his growing detachment to the world as unbecoming of one who had a wife to support. Yogin was shocked. Did he not marry only at the earnest importunity of his mother! From this time on Yogin's aversion for worldly life increased all the more. He thought Sri Ramakrishna was the only person who consistently and most selflessly loved him. And Yogin began to spend greater time with Sri Ramakrishna. The latter also found an opportunity to pay greater attention to the training of Yogin.

We have said Yogin was very soft-natured. It would be difficult for him to hurt even an insect. But sometimes too much gentleness becomes a source of trouble rather than being a virtue. Sri Ramakrishna noticed the softness in the character of Yogin and he wanted to bring this home to his disciple. Sri Ramakrishna once found that there were some cockroaches in his bundle of clothes. He asked Yogin to take those clothes outside the room and kill the cockroaches. Yogin performed the first part of the order and not the second one. He took the clothes outside the room. But as he was too gentle to kill the insects, he simply threw them away, and thought Sri Ramakrishna would not perhaps enquire about so much detail. But strangely enough Sri Ramakrishna asked Yogin whether he had killed those cockroaches. When Yogin answered in the negative, Sri Ramakrishna gave him a mild reproof, for not obeying his words in toto.

A similar incident happened on another day. Yogin was coming from Calcutta to Dakshineswar by a boat. There were other passengers on the boat. One of them began to criticize Sri Ramakrishna as being a hypocrite, and so on. Yogin felt hurt at such criticisms, but did not utter even a word of protest. Sri Ramakrishna needed no defence by Yogin; he was tall enough to be above the reach of any criticism by fools—Yogin thought. After coming to Dakshineswar Yogin narrated the incidents to Sri Ramakrishna and thought Sri Ramakrishna would approve of his goodness in not opposing the passengers. But Sri Ramakrishna did just the opposite. He took Yogin to task for pocketing the blasphemy heaped upon his Guru. 'A disciple should never hear criticisms hurled against his Guru without protest,' said Sri Ramakrishna. 'If he cannot protest, he should leave the spot forthwith.'

Once Yogin went to the market to make some purchases for Sri Ramakrishna. The cunning shopkeeper feigned to be very religious-minded and Yogin took him to be such. But when he turned to Dakshineswar, he found that the shopkeeper had cheated him. This called for a sharp rebuke from Sri Ramakrishna. 'A man may aspire to be religious; but that is no reason why he should be a fool,' said Sri Ramakrishna.

Though Yogin would trust a man easily and had the simplicity of a child, he was not a simpleton. Rather he had a keen discriminating mind and he was critical in his outlook. What opinion he would give about men and things would often prove true. But his critical attitude once led him to a quandary.

One day Yogin slept in the same

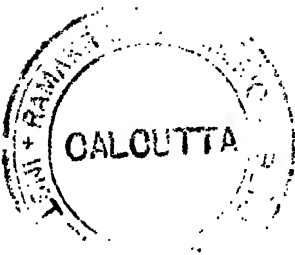
room with Sri Ramakrishna. In the dead of night Yogin found that Sri Ramakrishna was not in the room and the door was open. At first he felt curious, then became suspicious, as to where Sri Ramakrishna could go at such an unearthly hour. He came outside, but Sri Ramakrishna could not be seen. Did Sri Ramakrishna then go to his wife, who was then staying at the concert-room?—Yogin thought. Then Sri Ramakrishna was not what he professed himself to be! Yogin wanted to probe into the mystery, and stood near the concert-room to see if Sri Ramakrishna came out of the room. After some time Sri Ramakrishna came from the Panchavati side and was surprised to see Yogin standing near the concert-room. Yogin was stupefied and felt ashamed of himself for his suspicion. A greater sinful act can never be conceived of: to suspect the purity of a saint like Sri Ramakrishna even in thought! Yogin was horror-struck at his own conduct and did not know what to say. Sri Ramakrishna understood the whole situation and consoled his young disciple with the encouraging words: 'Yes, one should observe a Sadhu at day-time as well as at night before one would accept him as a guide.' With these words Sri Ramakrishna came to his room, followed mutely by Yogin. In spite of the sweet words from Sri Ramakrishna, Yogin had no sleep throughout the whole night, and later throughout the whole life he did not forgive himself for what he considered to be an extremely sinful act.

There are many incidents as to how Yogin with all his devotion to Sri Ramakrishna kept his critical faculty alert and did not fail to judge his Guru even. Once Yogin asked Sri Ramakrishna how one could get rid of sex idea. Sri Ramakrishna said that

could be easily done by prayer to God. This simple remedy did not satisfy Yogin. Yogin thought that there were so many persons who prayed to God, but nevertheless there came no change in their life. Yogin expected Sri Ramakrishna would suggest to him some Yogic practice, but he was disappointed in that, and came to the conclusion—Sri Ramakrishna's simple remedy was the outcome of his ignorance of any other better means. During that time there stayed at Dakshineswar a Hatha-Yogi who would show to visitors his dexterity in many Yogic feats. Yogin got interested in him. Once Yogin came to Dakshineswar and without meeting Sri Ramakrishna went straight to the Hatha-Yogi and was listening to his words spellbound. Strangely enough, exactly at that moment Sri Ramakrishna chanced to come to that place.

Seeing Yogin there, Sri Ramakrishna very endearingly caught hold of his arms and while leading him towards his own room said: 'Why did you go there? If you practise these Yogic exercises, your whole thought will be concentrated on the body and not on God.' Yogin was not the person to submit so easily. He thought within himself, perhaps Sri Ramakrishna was jealous of the Hatha-Yogi and was afraid lest Yogin's allegiance be transferred to the latter. Yogin always thought himself to be very clever. But on a second thought he tried the remedy suggested by Sri Ramakrishna. To his great surprise Yogin found wonderful results and felt ashamed of his doubting mind. Afterwards Swami Vivekananda used to say, 'If there is any one amongst us who is completely free from sex idea, it is Yogin.'

(To be continued)



NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE PRESENT WORLD WAR AND WESTERN SCIENCE

Prof. P. S. Naidu of the Annamalai University in a thought-provoking article contributed to the *Hindustan Review* of February, 1941 traces the effect of an one-sided development of the intellect on human character and gives some valuable suggestions regarding the organization of creative research in science. He shows how science itself has upset the law of conservation of matter and the law of causality and how this sudden unsettlement in the intellectual realm has brought about a parallel upsetting of settled views in the moral realm. He also shows how science has stimulated the desire for enjoyment thus causing the moral turpitude which has engendered the present war. He pleads for making science an adjunct of philosophy. Says he, 'It is on a philosophic foundation the edifice of science should be built. All students of science should be made to seek, as Jeans, Eddington, Whitehead, Haldane and Kohler are seeking, the true function of science in its service to philosophy and religion. Philosophy should be the culmination of science.' As knowledge is power, and power is a great corruptor of human nature unless held in check by moral and religious restraints, Prof. Naidu argues that the higher branches of science should be made accessible only

to those who have a well-developed moral and religious nature. As a life of detachment is essential for the fullest development of the human will as it manifests itself in religious and moral restraint, he wants that 'creative research in science should be undertaken only by an order of monks similar to the Ramakrishna Order, composed of men who are *in* the world but not *of* it.'

It seems to us that Prof. Naidu's suggestions are quite timely. India will come to her own very soon and in the great task of national reconstruction, the country should be quite alert to avoid the pitfalls inherent in the institutions nurtured in the West. We can certainly profit by other people's experience. If an over-emphasis on intellectual development at the cost of morality and religion has brought about the present unsatisfactory state of affairs in the West, as Prof. Naidu shows it has, it would be proper for this country to arrange to give its youth a more harmonious training which will lay due emphasis on the moral and religious aspects as well as the intellectual aspect of the training. May we add that poetry and the fine arts should also find their proper place in any scheme meant for the training of the whole man.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SOUL OF INDIA. By BIPIN CHANDRA PAL. Published by The New India Printing and Publishing Co., Ltd., Calcutta. Pp. 260. Price Rs. 2.

Mr. Pal is well known in Indian political circles as a staunch nationalist, a fluent speaker and a popular leader. The book under review reveals him as a profound student of Indian culture and philosophy. His visit to the West gave him the opportunity to study the temperament and social structure of the European people and, at the same time, expound the Indian nationalist ideal to the English people. After his return to India, one of his Christian friends, probably a young European lady, who was an admirer of India and her people, wanted to come to this country and study Indian life and culture more intimately. He advised her to stay on in her own country and undertook to acquaint her with an understanding of Indian life and thought through letters. In this book are included four long letters written to her during this period. These letters briefly touch upon a number of topics and the writer's main object is to present before his correspondent a true and unprejudiced pen-picture of real India. The Author says: 'The Soul of Europe and America is Christ; the Soul of India is, in the same way, Sri Krishna.' In presenting Sri Krishna as the 'Soul of India' he has had to give a place of importance to Vaishnavism and the Religion of Love as initiated by Sri Chaitanya. In this connection he observes that 'in Hindu Vaishnavism, we have a more thorough, more concrete, at once a more real and a more ideal presentation of the Universal than perhaps we have in any other culture.' And again, 'In Vaishnavism the innate sense of the Spiritual and the Universal of the Indo-Aryan Race-Consciousness seems to have found its loftiest and deepest expression.'

He begins by telling his correspondent that most of the books on India by foreign authors do not reveal the real Soul of India, the full truth and reality of Indian life and culture. Looking merely from outside on our religious ideals and institutions, every foreigner gives his own picture of India in the light of his experiences. In

this connection the author relates two humorous cases of such incorrect interpretation arising from superficial and apparent study. Next he takes up the study of the two great and ancient world-cultures—Hindu and Greek, wherein he presents the complex and composite character of either and draws attention to the various points of affinity and difference between them. In spite of the differences of temperament and outlook on life between the East and the West, the Hindu mind was in no way less scientific or less realistic than the Greek mind, for the former had wonderfully developed various arts and sciences to perfection even at a time when these were unknown in Europe. The Westerner's standard of intellectual and moral values built upon a wrongly-assumed sense of superiority does not allow him to see things dispassionately, with a detached mind. Here the author mentions the name of Sister Nivedita of the Order of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda as the one and only exception to this common type of Western writers. Mr. Pal pays a high tribute to her saying, 'Nivedita came to us as no European has as yet come, not as an adept, but as a novice; not as a teacher, but as a learner,' and points to her book *Web of Indian Life* as being a correct interpretation of Indian life and thought. Giving her the clue to the proper study and interpretation of any subject, the writer asks his friend to study, love and understand the holy men of India, the sages and saints, if she wants to truly appreciate Indian life and culture.

In his next letter Mr. Pal indicts both the reformer and the reactionary as following wrong methods not based on a real and correct appreciation of their own country and culture. The Soul of India, according to him, lies in the 'traditional middle path' of the sage and the philosopher. What this 'middle path' is should have caused not a little surprise in the immature mind of his young friend. After stating a few historical and geographical facts regarding India, her extent and population, the learned author proceeds to give an illuminating exposition of the ancient Hindu Varnashrama Dharma,

clearly bringing out the significance of the caste system and the stages into which man's life was divided. The caste system had a purpose to serve when it was introduced into Aryan society. It will die a natural death when there is no more necessity for it. Referring to the introduction of different stages of life through which every eligible person had to pass through, he rightly observes, 'Divisions and inequalities cannot absolutely be eliminated from any form of social organization, however democratic it may be.' Realizing this the Indo-Aryans had long ago brought this order of Ashramas into existence as a best possible solution of this problem, thus placing every eligible member of society, whatever office he may be holding, to undergo a course of discipline which will train him in self-detachment. He concludes the second letter by briefly reviewing the advantages and disadvantages of Moham-medan rule in India.

The last two letters constitute the main substance of the book. They are entitled 'India: The Mother' and 'Religious India.' Contrasting the concepts of unity and patriotism in the East with those in the West, he points out to his friend the fact that Hindu patriotism is based on love of humanity and devotion to motherland. The different aspects of Purusha and Prakriti are discussed in detail and compared with similar conceptions in Christianity. The writer's descriptions regarding Mother worship in Durga, Kali, and Jagaddhatri must have greatly interested his correspondent. Notwithstanding his strong Vaishnava leanings, the author does not minimize the importance of Shakti worship in contributing to the reawakening of national consciousness and aspirations. Entering upon a dissertation on Hindu philosophy, he shows how Hinduism is not a credal religion like Christianity, Islam or even Buddhism and briefly touches upon Vedantic thought which, he tells his friend, 'is the real key to Hindu religion.' Here the story of Varuna and his son Bhrigu is related as it is found in the Bhrigu Valli of Taittiriya Upanishad, and the author reads an allegorical meaning into this story. The concluding portion of the book is an exposition of the Vaishnava movement as in vogue in Bengal, popularly known as the Radha-Krishna cult. In this connection we may draw the attention of our readers to a fuller treatise on this subject by the

author entitled *Bengal Vaishnavism*. The author's width of outlook and well-balanced judgement are commendable. It may appear too superficial and wanting in details to a Hindu reader. But it is meant more for a foreign reader who is interested in a study of Indian thoughts and ideals. We heartily welcome the book. It is printed on good paper and nicely got up.

SCIENCE AND SUPERSTITION. By M. N. ROY. Published by the Indian Renaissance Association Ltd., Dehra Dun. Pp. 164. Price Re. 1-8 As.

Mr. Roy frankly avows in his preface that the criticism which his book is 'bound to provoke' 'will not be serious criticism.' He knows as well as we do that critics as a class treat serious literature seriously and lighter stuff in a lighter vein. A book is after all a book, it is at best the window through which the writer views the passing panorama of life. The house to which that particular window belongs may be perched on the top of a lofty peak or it may be situated in a blind alley seldom penetrated by the sun's rays. Each observer is entitled to give his own version of the passing show.

'The clay-feet of a number of time-honoured gods are exposed in this book,' says Mr. Roy. The ancient gods seated on high Olympus may view this pygmy of a mortal with a smile of derision, but a Christ and a Buddha, and a Ramakrishna and a Chaitanya, the gods on whom Mr. Roy attempts to try his psycho-analytical theories came to share humanity's joys and sorrows. We dare say that they have a soft corner in their hearts for Mr. Roy also. Mr. Roy claims to be a heretic. We do not know to what church he belongs to examine his claims to heresy. A Hindu can never be a heretic; the religion is wide enough to accept within its fold all and sundry who earnestly endeavour to realize the true values of life. As for materialism, Mr. Roy may know that the cult of the Charvakas was recognized by ancient Hindu philosophers as a school of thought which had a place in the scheme of things; Brihaspati, the preceptor of Indra, is the reputed founder of this school. There is nothing new under the sun. But let not Mr. Roy preach materialism in the name of modern science; we who happen to possess more than a layman's interest

in science may inform Mr. Roy that recent advances in mathematical physics have dealt a death-blow to materialism.

As for psycho-analysis, it is yet in its infancy. The serious student of religious and spiritual experiences has a wealth of good literature to study both in Eastern and Western languages. The seeker who

has a genuine interest in the question of the survival of human personality may find much food for thought in the writings of men of science like Sir Oliver Lodge, Frederic W. H. Myers, Prof. William James and others. He need not confine himself to the evidence of a nine year old child.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1940

The 32nd Annual General Meeting of the Ramakrishna Mission was held at the Belur Math on the 11th April. The following is a short report of the work done during the last year.

There were 61 Mission centres in India and abroad, and 64 Math centres working in close collaboration with the Mission, making up a total of 125 centres, besides 18 sub-centres. No less than 357 permanent institutions of various types were run, of which 275 belonged to the Mission proper. The Mission also undertook various temporary relief activities.

THE HEADQUARTERS

Besides directing the activities of the branch centres and supplying monastic workers to them, the Headquarters through its *Charitable Dispensary* served 25,744 patients and gave regular and occasional help to 10 students and 97 helpless widows and invalids, the total expenditure being Rs. 1,866-12-3. It also helped with monthly grants 15 Schools in different places with a total strength of 999. Many monks went all over India on *preaching tours* and held regular religious classes in and around Calcutta.

The Mission undertook *Flood Relief* work in the Midnapur District and distributed 482 mds. of rice, 1,129 pieces of new cloth and 825 pieces of old cloth to 1,895 persons belonging to 14 villages at a cost of Rs. 8,686-14-0. It also spent Rs. 275-4-0 for *Fire Relief* in Puri, Birbhum and Faridpur and Rs. 50-8-0 for *Malaria Relief* at Sonar-

gaon, Dt. Dacca. For *Famine Relief* in the Thar-Parkar District in Sind, it spent through a local party Rs. 950-12-0.

BRANCH CENTRES

The activities carried on by the branch centres fall under:

(1) Medical Service through Indoor Hospitals. The centres at Rangoon, Benares, Kankhal, Brindaban, Midnapur, Tamruk and Taki have each been maintaining a hospital. The total number of general beds in these and of maternity beds at the Shishumangal Pratishthan, Calcutta, the Rangoon Sevashrama and the Taki Shivananda Hospital was 596. The Rangoon Sevashrama with its 200 beds, the Benares Home of Service and the Kankhal Sevashrama are the largest hospitals of the Mission. The above 8 centres treated altogether 13,980 indoor patients.

(2) Medical Service through Outdoor Dispensaries. There were 40 Outdoor Dispensaries which treated 16,28,404 cases in all, the daily average being 4,462 as against 4,048 in 1939. The Sevashrama at Rangoon, with its 3,70,644 out-patients and a daily average of 1,025 continued to hold the biggest record. The T. B. Clinic at Delhi treated 17,801 cases.

(3) Help to the poor and Temporary Relief. The branch centres also served 10,582 patients in their homes, distributed about 410 mds. of rice and 1,085 pieces of cloth. Besides Rs. 4,280-4-9 was spent for occasional and regular help to 1,276 and 389 persons. During the Midnapur Flood,

the Tamluk centre organised a relief centre and helped 665 persons at a total cost of Rs. 1,219-7-9.

(4) *Educational Work*—The educational work of the Mission was conducted through (a) *Secondary Schools*—Residential and otherwise. Of the former, that at Deoghar had 148 students, the Madras Students' Home had 119, and the Vidyalaya near Coimbatore had 97 students. Of the Day Schools, the two in Madras with 2,058 boys and 942 girls are the biggest in the Mission. The three mixed High Schools in Ceylon had a total strength of 560. The Mission conducted altogether 12 High Schools and 12 M. E. Schools with a total of 4,443 boys and 2,327 girls. (b) *Primary and Night Schools*—There were 58 Primary Schools with 3,377 boys and 1,647 girls, and 17 Night Schools with 638 students. (c) *Industrial and Vocational Schools*—The Industrial School, Madras, and the Belur Industrial School had 45 and 48 students respectively. The former specialises in automobile engineering with a five-year course. It also gives vocational education to all the students of the Residential School. Agricultural education was provided at the Sarisha and Mansadwip centres. The Bankura Sevashrama had a section for training Homoeopathic students, and the Shishumangal Pratishthan and the Rangoon Sevashrama trained midwives and compounders respectively. The Sarada Vidyalaya of Madras had a training section for lady teachers for elementary schools. (d) *Students' Homes*—32 centres, including the Madras and Calcutta Students' Homes, accommodated 1,050 students of different schools and colleges. They were given all facilities for study and for developing their health and character.

(5) *Uplift of backward classes and areas*—The Mission has been trying its best to serve those classes and areas which have unfortunately fallen back culturally and educationally. Permanent centres like the educational and cultural centres in the Khasia and Jaintia Hills, as also the Ashrama Libraries, Schools, Dispensaries and Hospitals in villages like Taki, Sarisha, Magrajpur, Sonargaon, Baliati, Jayarambati, Sargachhi, etc. catered for the masses. Some of those centres organised tours with magic lanterns, gramophones, etc.

(6) *Spread of Culture and spiritual ideas*—Almost all centres conducted Libraries and Reading Rooms and organised public lectures and classes. Contacts with distinguished Western scholars were also made, and the Mission's monastic workers carried the message of Vedanta to different parts of India and foreign countries. In this connection, special mention may be made of the Institute of Culture in Calcutta, which has recently got the gift of a valuable library consisting of about 25,000 volumes from the heirs of Dr. Barid Baran Mukherjee of Calcutta. The Institute organised 32 lectures and 105 classes. The Mission Society at Rangoon had two Libraries containing 8,909 volumes. It conducted 82 classes and 25 lectures.

Foreign Work.—The foreign work of the Mission has been partly handicapped by the war. Thus the work in central Europe had to be stopped, the work in Paris had to be shifted to a less important township in unoccupied France, and the London work to a suburb. The work in the United States of America and the Argentina Republic is however flourishing. The Mission was quite successful in Mauritius, where a permanent centre is well on the way. The Singapore branch extended its work to Penang.

Schemes under development.—Substantial progress was made in connection with the T. B. Sanatorium at Dungri, near Ranchi, and the College at Belur. The Sanatorium has got 240 acres of land and has collected about Rs. 70,000/-, on which buildings are going to be constructed. The progress made with the College scheme is also encouraging. It will be started in July next.

Income and Expenditure.—The total income during the year 1940 was Rs. 11,94,578-12-6 and the total expenditure Rs. 13,00,714-14-½.

Conclusion.—From the above it will be apparent that the Mission has done a considerable amount of work during the year under review. While expressing its gratitude to all who contributed to it, the Mission appeals to one and all to continue their whole-hearted support and co-operation so that the philanthropic organisation founded by the illustrious Swami Vivekananda may make greater progress in the future.

RANGOON

The Ramakrishna Mission Society, Rangoon, celebrated the birthday anniversary

of Swami Vivekananda with a seven days' programme from the 19th to 26th

January, 1941. On the first day a largely attended public meeting was held in the prayer hall of the Society in which speeches on the life and message of Swami Vivekananda were delivered by the monastic members of the Order. Two other public meetings were included in the programme of the third and the fourth day when different speakers addressed the audience in Bengali, Hindi, Tamil and Telugu. On 22nd and 28th two meetings were organized for the college and school students respectively. The largest meeting in connection with the celebrations was held on the 25th in the City Hall of Rangoon. The Hon'ble U. Saw, Premier of Burma, presided. The celebrations came to an end on the 26th with the distribution of food among 495 Buddhist monks and about 3,000 poor people.

The birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was also observed with due éclat by the Society from the 28th February to 2nd March, 1941. The celebrations commenced early in the morning of the first

day, with chantings from the Vedas followed by Puja and Homa. A public meeting was held in the evening. A discourse on the Gita by Swami Ranganathananda and devotional music formed the programme for the second day. A public meeting with U. So Nyun, M.A., Bar-at-Law, Commissioner, Corporation of Rangoon, in the chair, was organized on the last day. The President in a highly illuminative speech paid a great tribute of respect to the prophet of Dakshineswar and concluded the speech by saying, 'His mission in life was to proclaim and clarify the fundamental unity of all religions. In that sense he was not a missionary in the commonly accepted sense of the term, for he was not out to preach any particular religion. His was a message of love for humanity, charity, tolerance and social service—a message which cannot fail to find a ready response in the hearts of every true Christian, every true Mohammedan, every true Hindu and every true Buddhist.'

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, RANGOON

The Sevashrama is one of the premier medical institutions conducted by the Ramakrishna Mission. Started in 1921 the Hospital has steadily grown in importance and usefulness until to-day it occupies a unique position among the medical institutions of Burma. The report of the institution for the year 1940 places before the public a short account of its activities during the year.

The year closed with 200 beds for indoor patients of which 34 were for women and children, 22 for maternity cases and the rest for male patients. In the male wards, besides surgical and medical sections, the Hospital has provision for special departments for eye, venereal and tuberculosis cases. The total number of indoor patients treated during the year was 6,681. The death rate was 5 per cent.

The outdoor department is divided into the following sections: (1) General

(2) Women and Children (3) Dental (4) Eye (5) Ear, Nose and Throat (6) Venereal and (7) Maternity. The total number of cases treated during the year in this department was 3,77,825 of which 1,26,579 were new cases. The average daily attendance was 1,025. 9,013 surgical cases, both principal and secondary, were dealt with during the year. 9,823 clinical tests were carried out in the laboratory of the Hospital.

Besides two consulting physicians and one consulting surgeon the Hospital had a staff of 27 doctors at the end of the year. Of these 7 were lady doctors. The nursing staff consisted of 19 nurses and midwives and 21 trained male workers. Two new departments—the Dental and the X-ray—were ready for opening towards the close of the year under review. Construction of a new block for the Maternity Section was taken up at the end of the year.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASADAN, SALKIA, HOWRAH

The activities of the Sevasadan for the years 1938-1940 may be brought under the following heads:

Philanthropic: An average of 12 poor families was helped in each year with monthly doles of rice. Besides these,

blankets, cloths and occasional doles of rice were distributed to 72 poor people. The Dispensary of the Sevasadan which provides for homoeopathic and biochemic treatment to poor patients treated 48,588 cases in 1940 as compared to 39,814 in 1938.

Educational: The Sevashram conducts a free Students' Home for school and college students which accommodated 14, 16 and 18 students respectively in the years 1938, 1939 and 1940. The academic education that the students get in schools and colleges is supplemented here by a course of moral and religious training. The Library of the Ashrama was well utilized by the students and the public.

Religious: Classes on the Bhagavad-Gita

and the lives and sayings of great seers and saints were conducted and the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna and some Hindu religious festivals were duly observed every year.

Present Needs: The Sevashram requires a total amount of Rs. 15,000/- for erecting buildings for the Dispensary and the Students' Home and a temple on the plot newly purchased for the purpose and sends its earnest appeal for funds to the generous public.

THE RAMAKRISHNA SEVASHRAMA, SHYAMALA TAL, HIMALAYAS

With the end of 1940 the Sevashram has completed the twenty-sixth year of its useful career. It has been the one and only source of medical relief to the helpless sufferers over a range of thirty miles in the deep Himalayan forests interspersed with groups of hamlets here and there. The report of the Sevashram for the year 1940 presents a short account of its activities during the year.

The indoor hospital had accommodation only for 6 patients. But through the generosity of a kind friend the construction of a new ward for 6 more patients was undertaken during the year. The total number of indoor patients was 162 of whom 102 were cured, 84 relieved, 25 left treatment and 1 died, 4,359 patients received treatment in the outdoor department of

whom 3,141 were new cases. The number of minor surgical operations came to 107.

A distinctive feature of the Sevashram consists in the treatment it provides to domestic animals when they suffer from diseases. This department was expanded and partially equipped during the year for proper treatment of the animals. The number of cases treated during the year has gone up from 1,360 of the previous year to 3,371.

Present Needs: (1) Funds for the upkeep of the Sevashram. (2) A Permanent Fund of not less than Rs. 20,000/- for general expenses. (3) A Permanent Fund for the treatment of dumb animals and a shed for accommodating them, for both of which Rs. 5,000/- is needed.

THE RAMAKRISHNA GURUKUL, THE VILANGANS, TRICHUR

A short account of the activities of the Gurukul in 1939 and 1940 as embodied in its report for the years is given below. The activities may be classified as follows:

The Gurukul and the Mathramandir: They are residential homes for boys and girls respectively and are meant mainly for the Harijans. There were 40 boys and 13 girls at the end of 1940. The inmates take a large share in the domestic management of the institutions. Besides the education they receive in the Vidyamandir, training in dairy and agriculture is imparted to the boys and the arts of cooking, sewing, needle-work etc. are taught to the girls.

The Vidyamandir: It has become a High School in 1940. The strength of the School in 1940 was 295 boys and 146 girls. There is arrangement for drill and group games for all the students. The School has provision for part-time training in agricul-

ture and gardening. The Co-operative Store dealing in school requisites and run by the students gives practical training to them in business methods. Moral and spiritual instructions form a part of their training.

The Industrial School: Boys and girls are trained here in weaving, mat-making, embroidery, needle-work, knitting etc. There were 21 boys in 1940 in the School. A rural and industrial exhibition was organized in 1939.

A regular weekly religious class was held for the Hindu prisoners in the Viyyur Central Jail. The following are some of the present needs of the institution: (1) A building for the Mathramandir which will cost Rs. 10,000/-. (2) A building for the Gurukul. (3) Quarters for workers. (4) A Workshop for vocational training. (5) A Science Laboratory. (6) A Gymnasium.

**THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME AND SHIVANANDA
VIDYALAYA, BATTICALOA, CEYLON**

The report of the Students' Home and Shivananda Vidyalyaya places before the public an account of its useful activities for the year ending 28th February, 1941. The Vidyalyaya had 148 students on its roll at the end of the year. All the 4 students sent for the J. S. C. Examination in June, 1940, and 7 out of the 9 students who sat for the S. S. C. Examination came out successful. Another 18 students appeared in the J. S. C. Examination held in the latter half of the year and 5 in the Cambridge Senior Examination. But their results were not known till the publication of the report. The study of modern science occupies a prominent place in the curriculum of the school. The Literary and Debating Societies conducted by the students worked well during the year and a number of papers containing records of observations and experiments carried out by the students under the auspices of the Science Association were contributed to the manuscript magazine, the *Naturalist*. 30 students were

taken on an excursion to the historic city of Anuradhapur. The School Library contains 1,500 volumes of books and many leading dailies and periodicals. Two weekly classes were organized for higher studies in Tamil literature. 12 and 22 students joined the two classes. There is a hostel attached to the School which accommodated 41 monthly, 17 weekly and 15 day boarders.

The Students' Home provides free boarding, lodging and education to needy and deserving students. There were 39 students in the Home at the end of the year. The shrine attached to the Home offers all facilities to the students for spiritual culture. The administration of the Home is chiefly in the hands of the boys which supplies them the opportunity to cultivate the virtue of self-help. Exercises and outdoor activities form a part of their daily life. The authorities appeal to the generous public for funds for the upkeep and maintenance of the institution.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, BARISAL

The report of the Ramakrishna Mission, Barisal, for the years 1937—1939, puts before the public a short account of the activities of the centre for these years. The activities may be classed under the following heads:

Educational: The Mission conducts a Students' Home which accommodated 11 college students during the year 1939. Of these 2 were free and 9 half free. The object of the Home is to train boys on the line of the ancient Brahmacharya Ashrama.

The Ashrama runs a Library and a Reading Room which are open to the public.

Philanthropic: Poor people are helped with monthly or occasional doles of rice. 42 patients were attended to at their own homes and 8 dead bodies were cremated

during the period under report. In 1938 arrangements were made in the Ashrama for the treatment of 152 cases of eye diseases including 72 cases of cataract operation.

Religious: A class on various Hindu scriptures was held in the Ashrama on every Sunday. Besides these occasional lectures and discourses on topics of religious interest were arranged. The various Hindu festivals were duly observed and the birthdays of the great religious leaders of the world were celebrated.

Present Needs: (1) Rs. 10,000/- for a building of the Students' Home. (2) A permanent fund for the Home. (3) Rs. 4,500/- for extension of the Ashrama building. (4) Funds for improvement of the Library building and the Ashrama ground.



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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

THE WAY TO REALIZATION—YEARNING AND FAITH

Sri Ramakrishna : ‘One should have faith in the words of the Guru. The Guru is no other than Sachchidananda Himself. It is Sachchidananda who comes in the guise of the Guru. One having childlike faith in the words of the Guru is blessed with the vision of God. How wonderful is the faith of a child ! If the mother says of a stranger, “My child, he is your elder brother, know him as such,” the child believes it beyond a shadow of doubt and looks upon him as his own elder brother. The child may be born of Brahmin parents and the man introduced may be a carpenter or blacksmith by caste, but that does not matter ! To frighten the child the mother might say, “There is a hobgoblin in that room.” And the child takes it for certain that the room is really a haunted one. Such is the faith of a child and such faith one should have in the words of the Guru. God is beyond the reach of a cunning, deceitful

and ratiocinative mind. Faith and sincerity are required. Hypocrisy leads man away from God. He is easily accessible to a simple mind but remote from one that is insincere.

‘A child separated from its mother becomes restive and throws away even the sweet that you may place in its hands to divert its mind. It is not consoled by anything but keeps on crying to go to its mother. Such a yearning one should have for God. Ah, what an exalted state it is when one attains that yearning and becomes like a child that has gone mad for its mother and is not appeased by anything else ! He alone can have this intense longing for the Mother who has rejected all enjoyments of the world as distasteful as a curry without salt and has shaken off all attraction that wealth and honour, physical comforts and sense-pleasures can offer. The Mother also hurries to him by leaving Her other works.

‘This yearning is required. Whatever path you may follow—that of a Hindu,

Muhammadan, Christian, Shakta or a Brahma-Jnani—it is this yearning that matters. The Lord dwells in the heart of all and will forgive you even if you go astray, but have this yearning in your heart. He will put you again on the right track.

'In every path there is the possibility of error. Everyone thinks that his watch is going right. The fact is that no watch can keep perfectly good time. But that does not hinder one from doing his work. If there is earnestness Providence will put you in good company in the light of which you may set your watch right to a great extent.'

Srijut Trailokya of Brahma Samaj is singing. The Master listens to the music for a while and then stands up suddenly and loses himself in a state of divine ecstasy. His mind is withdrawn completely from the external world and he stands there, merged in Samadhi. All the devotees stand around him. Bankim pushes his way hurriedly to Sri Ramakrishna and observes him intently. He has never witnessed the state of Samadhi.

After a time the Master regains partial consciousness of the external world and begins to dance in a state of God-intoxication. It seems as if Sri Gouranga was dancing in the house of Srivasa. Bankim and others—people with English education—stand speechless at the sight of that wonderful dance. What a wonder! Is this the bliss of divine love? Can a man become so lost in his love for God? Did Sri Gauranga enact similar scenes at Navadvip? And was it this way that Navadvip and Srikshetra were deluged by him with divine love? There cannot be any pretension in it. He has renounced everything and has no desire either for gold or name and fame. Is this, then, the goal of life? To love God wholeheartedly, without paying attention to

anything else—is this the end of life? But what is the way to it? He says that it lies in intense yearning for the Mother. This yearning or love is both the means and the end. Realization dawns on the attainment of real love.

Such are the thoughts that cross the minds of the devotees while they witness that ecstatic dance and the joy born of devotional music. All stand around the Master with their eyes fixed on him.

The Kirtan is over. The Master prostrates himself on the ground and says, 'Bhagavat, Bhakta, Bhagavan; I bow down to all—the Jnani, the Yogi and the Bhakta.' All resume their seats again around him.

SRIJUT BANKIM AND THE PATH OF DEVOTION; THE LOVE OF GOD

Bankim (to Sri Ramakrishna): 'Sir, how can we have devotion?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'The one thing essential is a strong longing for God. As a child, if it misses its mother, cries and becomes restless for her, so should one weep and yearn for God. This may lead him even to the realization of God.'

'The rosy hues on the eastern horizon before dawn herald the approaching sunrise. So, whenever you find a man pining and panting for God, know that he will realize Him soon.'

'A disciple once asked his Guru how he could have the realization of God. The Guru said, "Come with me and I shall show you how you can realize Him," and led him to a tank. Both of them entered the tank when all on a sudden the Guru caught hold of the disciple and plunged him under water. After a time he released the disciple, who at once raised his head from under the water and stood up. The Guru then asked, "How did you feel?" The disciple replied, "I felt as though I was dying." The Guru said, "Yes, when your heart will pant like this for God,

know that you will presently realize Him."

'So I say, What is the good of floating on the surface? Just dive deep. A rich treasure of pearls and jewels lies at the bottom of the water, and how can you reach it by floating on the surface? A real pearl is a heavy substance and does not float on water. So, if you are earnest in getting real pearls, plunge yourself deep into the water.'

Bankim : 'Sir, what can we do ! There is a cork tied behind us. (All laugh). It does not allow us to dive deep.'

Sri Ramakrishna : 'The thought of God redeems man of all his sins and the utterance of His name sets him free from the meshes of death. Pearls cannot be had unless one goes deep to the bottom of the water. Just listen to a song.'

Song :

'Dive deep, dive deep, O my mind,
dive deep into the Ocean of Beauty !
Make a search in the regions deep
under the sea and you will come by
the treasure, the Pearl of Divine
Love !

In thine own heart abideth Brindaban,
the Home of Love, seek for it and
discover ;

And for ever, then, will the Light of
Wisdom illumine thy mind !

Who is that Being that doth steer His
boat on land—on solid ground ?

Says Kabir, Listen, O listen, meditate
on the hallowed feet of the Guru,
the Divine Preceptor !'

In his divinely sweet voice the Master
sings the song and the whole audience
listens to it with rapt attention. The
song being over, the conversation begins
again.

Sri Ramakrishna (to *Bankim*) : 'There are people who do not like to dive deep. They say, "Should we go off our brain by running into excesses in the thought of God ?" They consider those that have

intense love for God as really insane. They cannot understand the simple fact that Sachchidananda, the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, is the sea of immortality.

'Once I asked Narendra, "Suppose there is a vessel with a wide mouth and filled with the syrup of sugar, and suppose you are a fly. Where would you sit to drink the syrup?" He replied, "I shall sit on the edge of the vessel and drink the syrup by stretching my mouth." On my asking again what was the harm if he dived into the vessel and drank, he replied that he would then be drowned and lose his life. Thereupon I said, "But, my boy, the liquid of the sea of Sachchidananda is not like that; it is the liquid of immortality and people do not lose their life if they dive into it, but come back with eternal life."

'So I say, Dive deep. There is no fear in it. You will gain immortality.'

Bankim makes obeisance to *Sri Ramakrishna*. He will take leave now.

Bankim : 'Sir, I am not so great a fool as you have thought. But one request I have to make : Please pay a visit to my humble cottage once.'

Sri Ramakrishna (with a smile) : 'I shall be glad to do it, of course, if the Lord wills.'

Bankim : 'You will find that in that locality too, there are devotees.'

Sri Ramakrishna (with a smile) : 'Well, let me ask you, what kind of devotees are they? Are they like those of the fable who used to repeat, "Gopala, Gopala" and "Keshava, Keshava?"' (All laugh).

A devotee : 'Sir, what is that story?'

Sri Ramakrishna (laughing) : 'Let me then tell you the story. In a certain place there were some goldsmiths who had a jewellery shop. They appeared as great Vaishnavas with strings of beads on their necks and sacred marks on their bodies, and were often found to

hold the rosary in their hands and repeat the name of the Lord. They could as well be called Sadhus but for the fact that they had to earn their livelihood and maintain their families by working as goldsmiths. Their reputation as great devotees drew many a customer to their shop, who thought that the gold and silver these people dealt in would not be spurious. Whenever a customer entered the shop he would see that though their hands were at work, their lips never ceased repeating the name of the Lord. As soon as a customer entered the shop and took his seat, one of the goldsmiths would cry out, "Keshava, Keshava, Keshava." After a while another would repeat, "Gopala, Gopala, Gopala." No sooner did they proceed with the terms of the bargain, than a third would exclaim, "Hari, Hari, Hari." When the terms had almost been settled, a fourth would cry out, "Hara, Hara, Hara." The exhibition of such love and devotion for God would naturally convince the

customers of the honesty of the goldsmiths and they would easily pay the amount charged for the ornaments.

"But do you know the real secret of the whole thing? The man who repeated, "Keshava, Keshava," was asking, "Who are these people—these customers?" The other man by uttering, "Gopala, Gopala," replied that they were no better than a herd of fools. The man who repeated, "Hari, Hari," was saying, "If they are such, let us then deceive them." The fourth man concluded the course by saying, "Yes, deprive them of their all." (All laugh).

Bankim takes leave now. He is in a thoughtful mood. Coming at the door he discovers that he has left his Chaddar behind and has nothing but a shirt on. A gentleman runs to him with the Chaddar and hands it over to him. What is Bankim thinking about?

¹ Here is a pun on the words 'Keshava, Gopala, Hari and Hara,' which are names of the Lord and also bear the meaning expressed above.

"When a mind is free from attachment to sense-objects, it goes straight to God and is fixed on Him. Bound souls become free in this way. That soul is bound which takes the path that leads away from God."

—Sri Ramakrishna

PERFECTION THROUGH SELF-CONQUEST

While perusing an ancient Tamil treatise on rhetoric we came across a definition of the term 'conquest.' The author, Tolkappiyanar, reputed to be the first among the twelve disciples of the sage Agastya, says that conquest is the attaining of excellence naturally and non-violently in the particular vocation to which one is called by virtue of his birth and other circumstances. Proceeding to consider one by one the various social groups, the author says that conquest for the Brahmin consists in attaining excellence in the acquisition and dissemination of learning, in the performance of Vedic sacrifices and in receiving and making gifts. Conquest for kings consists in the promotion of learning, in the performing of Vedic sacrifices such as the Rajasuya and the Aswamedha, in making gifts, protecting the people and punishing wrongdoers. The last-mentioned act may be directed towards unrighteous kings of other countries, in which case it was the duty of the conqueror to afford protection to the people of the conquered territories. Conquest for the sages (Arivars) consists in the disciplining of body and mind, by acquiring a steady posture, by controlling thoughts and the senses, by the practice of concentration and contemplation upon the ideal. Conquest for the men engaged in the performance of austerities consists in overcoming the sensations of heat and cold, hunger and the cravings of the senses. Conquest for the soldier and all other combatants such as those who contest for the first place in oratory, music, dancing, composing verses *extempore*, various games of skill, cock-fighting, ram-fighting, gambling, etc. consists in attaining excellence in the chosen vocation.

Elsewhere the author speaks of 'aggression' defining it as the annexation of another's territory by aggressive warfare. The commentator cites the case of Hiranyakasipu, the Titan king who achieved world-domination, as an example of 'no-conquest.' For, says he, undue effort was employed and the act was not approved by righteous men; therefore, it could not be classed as 'conquest.'

* * *

There seems to be a great deal of wisdom in the words of the ancient author, particularly where he makes 'conquest' a grand moral ideal applicable to all. The verdict of righteous men being the deciding voice in determining whether the result of a conflict was a 'conquest' or a mere 'aggression,' war itself stands raised to a high moral level. The ancients, of course, had no idea of totalitarian war such as the conflict we are witnessing now. The invading monarch sent criers who gave the warning signal and proclaimed their sovereign's message in terms such as these, found in an ancient poem: 'May cows, and holy Brahmins who are as innocent as the gentle kine, the sick and the infirm, women and also those men who are not blessed with male children to perform their funeral rites speedily take shelter; for our troops are marching against this city.' To modern ears this might appear to be a bit of ancient folly. But when we give some thought to the matter, we find the good sense behind the proclamation. By affording protection to a section of non-combatants, the invading monarch secured the same kind of protection to the same section of non-combatants in his own territories. Both parties instinctively

knew that the moral ideal was all powerful and that it acted unerringly. Self-interest itself demanded the strict observance of the moral law. Ancient moral philosophy and the beautiful legends worked out by the sages to illustrate the way in which the gods inflicted punishment on all who transgressed the law clearly show that the ancients fully grasped the sovereignty of law and the impossibility of breaking it with impunity. Our great living poet, the noble scion of the race of Rishis and the inheritor of the wisdom of our past, emphasized the same truth in a recent pronouncement, wherein he stated, 'By iniquity a man may thrive, may see many a good in life, may conquer his enemies, but iniquity, at last, is sure to overwhelm and destroy him.'

* * *

The ancients who defined wealth as the fullness experienced by the mind when all desires were completely satisfied and who likewise defined poverty as mental distress caused by unsatisfied desires took a subjective view of victory and defeat. Both victory and defeat were experienced by the mind before they were externally realized. The firm unflinching mind that meets all obstacles cheerfully and overcomes them is the conquering mind. The mind that shrinks from the path of duty and is cowed down by trials and tribulations carries within itself the seeds of defeat and disaster. Viewed in this light we find that the discipline which the true soldier has to undergo is not different from the discipline prescribed for the true monk. The fields of battle may be different but the moral stamina necessary for successfully facing the enemy is identically the same. After the fall of France Marshal Petain unambiguously stated that languid morals were at the root of the defeat sustained by his people. The

Romans enervated by luxury and pride of power were no match to the barbarians who came fresh from the lap of mother nature unspoilt by ease and luxury. Life itself is a battle-field and perpetual alertness is demanded of him who would win the victories of peace and achieve success in life. A people get emasculated when they are denied the opportunity of taking their rightful place in the defence of their own hearths and homes. A false sense of security which makes a disarmed people look to someone else for protecting all that is near and dear to them eventually leads them to a mental attitude that shrinks from all effort. Re-education that may culminate in getting over the emasculation may properly begin by disciplining the people to face obstacles cheerfully and be prepared to lose life in order to gain it in a fuller measure. The heart of the true knight and the true warrior is indeed the efflorescence of a cultivated body and mind. There is no reason why every young man should not strive to acquire it. The old warrior Ulysses feels that age and the vicissitudes of fortune are powerless to stifle the will to conquer. We quote Tennyson's inimitable lines in which the old hero says,

Tho' much is taken, much abides;
and tho'

We are not now that strength which
in old days

Moved earth and heaven: that
which we are, we are;

One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but
strong in will

To strive, to seek, to find, and not
to yield.

* * *

The Hindu scriptures assign a particular heaven to the heroes who fall in the battle-field. The idea may be extended and the scriptural text may be

taken to mean that he alone conquers heaven who unflinchingly fights the good battle here on earth. The Lord clearly says in the Gita that the saving knowledge is not for the weak.

'Dying thou gainest heaven; conquering thou enjoyest the earth. Therefore, O son of Kunti, arise, resolved to fight.' This message is addressed not only to the son of Kunti, but also to all sons and daughters of Mother India. Not only the men in the fighting forces but all who are in the battle-field of life should make pain and pleasure, gain and loss, conquest and death the same and engage themselves in the good fight. The path to freedom is beset with many obstacles, the conquering mind cheerfully faces them. In the verses next to those which we quoted above the Lord asks the aspirant to cultivate one-pointed determination, for that helps the focussing of all forces into a single spear-head. Conquest is achieved by the mind that can grasp essentials and without waste of effort march straight to the goal. We dare say that the mind which can successfully order the smaller concerns of life will, if the opportunity presents itself, solve larger problems equally successfully. The mayor who has the clarity of vision and the necessary foresight and imagination to control the affairs of a city possesses almost the same type of mind as the premier of a great empire. Napoleon planned his campaigns in his boyhood and when the opportunity presented itself marched across the Alps and rehearsed them on a grand scale.

* * *

Bhakti-Yoga recommends that every aspirant should cultivate some personal relation with his heart's Deity. Why should one confine oneself to the Brindaban aspect and like the Gopis of yore look upon the Lord as the beloved? Why should we not cultivate the

Kurukshetra aspect and, as Swami Vivekananda pertinently says, look upon Parthasarathi as our own charioteer in the battle-field of life? He will certainly drive our chariot onwards along the path of conquest. All obstacles will vanish into thin air. 'Your country wants heroes, be heroes.' Let this be our watchword. Let us try and understand the true import of the teachings of the ancient Rishis. They were strong-boned men who unflinchingly gave their life in fighting for the right. They had a positive conception of virtue; the hero who faced the difficulties of life and overcame them was considered by the ancients as the truly virtuous man. They sang his praise and treasured his memory. Sri Ramachandra, the great warrior and true knight, is regarded by the Hindus as the manifestation of the Supreme Being. The monk who embraces voluntary poverty demands our respect, not because of his poverty, which in itself is an ignoble thing, but because of his heroism in rising above the petty desires of the flesh. Gautama Buddha is revered by Hindus not for the fact of his being the founder of a new religion, but because he is the 'conqueror' of Mara and his hordes.

* * *

There is a nobility which mere birth cannot confer. The silent strong man who stands firm as yonder peak unmoved by the buffetings of the sweeping winds of disaster and misfortune has indeed perfected his character. The acquiring of such steadiness has not been the work of a passing moment, nor is it the result of much book-learning. The very disasters and misfortunes went to the shaping of that character. Calm and alert, steadfast in the performance of the humblest of duties, that man has built his character bit by bit. Even the passing stranger that meets him on the wayside points to him and says, 'There

goes a man,' thus investing him with a title nobler than that of the proudest peer of the realm. At the present time when India is passing through a period of preparation for fuller self-expression, even the men and women who are old in years have the right to feel young in spirit. The time for futile despair and meaningless grumbling has receded into the background. We see before us the breaking of a new dawn. The call of the great patriot-prophet of Modern India falls on our ears like the bugle-call that summons the warrior to the field of action. 'Come, be men! Come out of your narrow holes and have a look abroad. See how nations are on the march! Do you love man? Do you love your country? Then come, let us struggle for higher and better things; look not back, no, not even if you see the dearest and nearest cry. Look not back, but forward! India wants the sacrifice of at least a thousand of her young men—men, mind, and not brutes. The English Government has been the instrument brought over here by the Lord, to break your crystallized civilization, and Madras supplied the first men who helped in giving the English a footing. How many men, unselfish, thorough-going men, is Madras ready now to supply, to struggle unto life and death to bring about a new state of things—sympathy for the poor—and bread to their hungry mouths—enlightenment to the people at large—and struggle unto death to make men of them who have been brought to the level of beasts by the tyranny of your forefathers? . . . Calm and silent and steady work, and no newspaper humbug, no name-making, you must always remember.'

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In all his pronouncements on education Swami Vivekananda pleaded for a man-making, character-building education. Happy indeed is the man who is

born in a good family inheriting high and noble ideals and happier is he who comes in living contact with a teacher who can draw out the best in him. But all men regardless of their birth and education have in them that inner perfection which they can manifest if they begin to mould their character with sincerity and earnestness. The ethical teachings of all religions exhort man to conquer self. These teachings have often been misunderstood. The extreme stoical virtues of fortitude, endurance and self-abnegation were considered to be the essential attributes of self-conquest. Starving of the flesh and the withdrawing of oneself from the normal pleasures of the world may often lead to an unbalanced state of mind diametrically opposed to that self-control which is necessary for self-conquest. 'A man should uplift himself by his own self, so let him not weaken this self. For this self is the friend of oneself, and this self is the enemy of oneself. The self (the active part of our nature) is the friend of the self, for him who has conquered himself by this self. But to the unconquered self, this self is inimical, (and behaves) like (an external) foe' (Gita VI. 5, 6). What is advocated is neither the starving nor the destroying of body and mind but bringing them under the sovereignty of the soul, the true self of man. The senses which are the gateways of knowledge should be made keener and quicker. The physical frame should be made lithe and strong.

Of greater importance is the freeing of the mind from passion and prejudice and the opening of it to receive healthy thoughts. Tolerance and equanimity are not gained overnight by mere intellectual affirmation. They have to be assiduously cultivated. The moral virtues of friendliness (Maitri) towards those that are happy, compassion (Karuna) towards those who suffer from misery,

gladness (Mudita) on seeing virtuous people and indifference (Upeksha) towards evil-doers are the four attitudes recommended by treatises on Yoga to persons who are keen on developing the mind on right lines. All the above presupposes man to be an active member of a well-ordered society. The ruler of a kingdom as well as a simple day-labourer has the fullest opportunity for practising the above.

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Yoga has been defined as the very dexterity of work. The true craftsman has to conquer sloth and indolence. Even the humblest duties well-performed contribute to the raising of the moral stature of man. He who is keen on mastering his tools cannot afford to neglect the smallest detail. Training of the hands and eyes is also a form of Yoga. In the discipline necessary for the attainment of self-mastery and perfection the means are as important as the end. The occupation which a person takes up as the means of his livelihood should be a righteous one; it should contribute to the general welfare. It is also desirable that it should be creative and thereby afford a means of self-expression to the worker. Pottery and shoemaking can be quite as creative as sculpture and the composing of original music. Coarseness, untidiness, clumsiness and such other things which offend good taste are the obstacles which should be conquered by the artisan who wants to raise his work to the status of an art.

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The ancients who cultivated the fine art of character-making and made a careful study of the science of self-conquest spoke of the threefold restraint of the body, the threefold restraint of the mind and the fourfold restraint of speech. Lust, violence and the predatory instinct, they say, are the evils that soil the body; greed, anger and delusion are the sins

that stain the mind; falsehood, slander, harsh words and idle gossip are the faults of the tongue. All these evils should be eradicated by the person who aspires for perfection through self-conquest. In all these cases the remedy recommended is the careful cultivation of the opposite virtues. With unceasing alertness man should emancipate himself from evil propensities and exercise the ten restraints. This can be and has to be done by man in his everyday life. Moderation in food and drink, cleanliness, inner purity, tidiness, gentle behaviour and propriety may be cultivated by the person who is desirous of conquering the cravings of the flesh. Polite speech, courteous manners, true humility, love of justice and fair-play, truthfulness, absence of jealousy and the cultivation of learning may eradicate the faults of speech. Meekness, forbearance, sympathy, universal love, contentment, and the striving for the attainment of true wisdom may remove the evils of the mind. In religious allegories evil propensities and the forces of good are personified and are described as engaged in mortal strife. John Bunyan in his *Pilgrim's Progress* describes many conflicts of a similar kind. The *Jataka Stories* tell us that the Bodhisattva had to practise the virtues in five hundred births before he attained Buddhahood. The course of discipline is indeed long and strenuous, but every battle won contributes its quota to the final conquest.

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'Disease, mental laziness, doubt, lack of enthusiasm, lethargy, clinging to sense-enjoyments, false perception, non-attaining of concentration, and falling away from the state when obtained' are enumerated as the obstructing distractions. Bodily and mental health go a great way to help a person to get over grief, worry and distress and the thousand ills to which humanity is heir. But he is the hero who can conquer even

these limitations. He who knows even a little bit of Vedanta can take his stand upon his true self and smile at all ills. There is nothing so purifying as knowledge. True knowledge energizes. Right discrimination is the motive power for right endeavour. The scriptures may not disclose the gem of truth to the casual reader who tries to scratch on the surface. He has to dig deep. Commentaries may serve the scholar and help him to make learned disquisitions. But these do not satisfy the soul. By deep thinking, sincerity and steady application the earnest student may succeed in grasping a few truths. These would enrich him for life. The illiterate man who has carefully listened to a wise teacher and by steady effort has succeeded in realizing a few truths possesses more wisdom than the scholar who may carry on his head tons of learning without having undergone an ounce of practice. The acquisition of wisdom is the only way for conquering ignorance. Life in society with its pains and pleasures, ambitions and disappointments, loves and hatreds is the crucible in which the dross of ignorance is burnt off and the gold of true wisdom is made to reveal its lustre. If this world were merely a pleasure garden manly virtues would perish by sheer inanition.

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The old Spartan who whipped the young fellow who exhibited softness or effeminacy and the Victorian school-

master who freely used the rod on the back of his delinquent pupil succeeded in fashioning sturdy soldiers and meticulous civil servants. The educator of to-day may not go so far as that, but he may be considered to have failed in his duty if he makes life too soft for his wards. Even as nourishing food and physical exercise are necessary for building up a healthy body, hard work, strenuous effort, trials and disappointments are necessary to build up a high character. Character-building is creative work. Lives of great men may help one to some extent to tread the path to perfection. Blind imitation of mere forms is in itself a very poor thing. How we could utilize the influence of great lives in forming our character may be seen from the following passage culled from Plutarch. Says he, in the *Life of Pericles*; 'The goods of fortune we would possess and would enjoy; those of virtue we long to practise and exercise; we are content to receive the former from others, the latter we wish others to experience from us. Moral good is a practical stimulus; it is no sooner seen, than it inspires an impulse to practise; and influences the mind and character not by a mere imitation we look at, but by the statement of the fact creates a moral purpose that we form.'

MAYAVATI,
17 May, 1941.

KARMA-YOGA AS A MORAL IDEAL

BY DR. SATISH CHANDRA CHATTERJEE, M.A., PH.D.

One of the stock criticisms directed against Indian thought is that it is passive and pessimistic. It dwells more on the darker aspects of life in this world and condemns all worldly things as sources of suffering and misery. It finds no good in anything of this life and exhorts men either to extinguish the flame of all life or to escape from life in this world and find the supreme good in some other life and in some other world. As a consequence, Indian thinkers turn away from all worldly things and maintain an attitude of supreme indifference to the duties and responsibilities of our practical life. They give up the ordinary pursuits of life and remain absorbed in mystic contemplation of the divine or the transcendent reality. It is an inert and inactive life that they must live, for that is best suited to the philosophy they follow and the religion they preach to the world.

The above criticism has been repeated not only by Western critics but also by some Indian exponents of Indian thought. By constant repetition it has acquired an air of truth about it. But a closer and deeper study of Indian thought would show that the criticism rests on partial and imperfect knowledge. Whether we turn to the Vedas and the Upanishads or to the Bhagavad-Gita and the systems of philosophy, we would nowhere find a view of life which repudiates life, rejects the world, and renounces the values of worldly objects. What Indian thought tries to accomplish is to change our outlook of life and not destroy or impoverish it.

Life in this world, as it is being thoughtlessly led by us, is far from being satisfactory. An insight into the reality of things and a rational scrutiny of the values of life are necessary in order that life in this world may be led wisely and peacefully. We are not to deny and destroy life, repress our desires and aspirations, and abstain from all activity. What we have to do is to take a philosophic view of things and so live and act in this world as to realize our highest good which is our highest self. This will become perfectly clear from a careful study of the teachings of the Bhagavad-Gita on the ideal of Karma.

There are certain critical moments of our life when in the face of impending dangers and calamities we, like Arjuna, are seized with a terrible fear and despair of life altogether. We feel tempted to withdraw from the world and renounce all worldly activities. To one who is thus lost in despair and would fain refrain from all activity, the Gita offers the wise counsel that to cease to act outwardly is not to free oneself from the iron chain of Karmas or actions and that to give up all activity is not necessarily to attain the perfect life (III.4). Those who believe that freedom from the fetters of Karma is attainable through mere cessation of activity forget that it always involves the possibility of a relapse into the state of activity in future. If freedom means final and complete deliverance from the bondage of worldly actions, then that is not to be attained by a temporary suspension of the ordinary activities of life. So also, the perfect

life is not the mere negation of activity. It is not the void caused by the elimination of life's activities. Rather it is a positive state of the fulfilment of life in which the soul shines in its glory and abounds in its bliss. If perfection were merely a state of passivity and inertness, a stone would be more perfect than a saint. Further, the law of nature makes it impossible for us to abandon all activities. However much one may try to repress the springs of action, he finds himself helpless before the tremendous powers of Prakriti or the primal matter in him. This will make him act in spite of himself (III.5). If a man is to live at all he must exert himself at least to satisfy his natural wants like hunger, thirst, etc. Whether we would or not, nature will force us to act and respond to her calls (III.8). Consider what would life be, if it be bereft of all activity. Life without any activity is physically impossible. We may give up this or that contingent act of our cultural or social life. But we cannot stop the functions or activities of the body. These must go on if we are to remain alive. Life is activity, inactivity means death. Even the social and cultural activities of individuals cannot cease for long if a stable social order is to be maintained. To safeguard our social life and preserve our culture even the wisest members of society must keep themselves engaged in some good work, if only to set the example to others. The social structure is sure to collapse if the wise ones poison the springs of activity in the mass by living a life of indolence and inactivity (III.20-25). To stop all outward actions by restraining our motor organs, while the mind remains absorbed in things of sense, is not to be virtuous but hypocritical (III. 6). A sincere life of renunciation is saintly indeed. But it is the height of

folly merely to paralyse our organs of action in the hope of attaining sainthood, although our mind continues to dwell on things of sense as greedily as ever. There is hope for a sincere sinner, but there is no hope for a moral impostor. The Bhagavad-Gita inculcates the necessity of action for all men in such unequivocal and emphatic words.

Since the performance of Karma is not only necessary but also salutary for all men, the questions naturally arise: What are the Karmas or actions which one ought to perform? How again are these actions to be performed? The Gita gives very clear and definite answers to these. Everyone must do the duties assigned to him by his nature, capacity, and position in life and society (III.8, 19, 35; XVIII.7, 9, 45-48). Men are born each with a certain predominant nature and certain innate capacities. Different natural gifts and capacities fit individual men for different callings of life. So also the different stages of life entail different duties on all individuals. The duties of a student's life must needs be different from the householder's. While the one should devote all his energies to the healthy growth of the body and the mind, the other must shoulder the responsibility of maintaining his family and contributing to the good of society. A man's position in society, the class to which he belongs, also determines the nature of the duties he has to perform. But a man's place in the social order is determined by his nature and inborn capacities. An individual possessing one set of talent, temperament and character belongs to one class and has got to perform one specified type of duties. Thus a Brahmin finds the duties of sense-control, purification, devotion to truth and faith in God to be congenial to his nature. The nature

of a Kshatriya, however, prefers other duties such as a heroic fight against injustice and oppression, and incessant efforts to conserve social order and prosperity (XVIII.41-42). The actions which one ought to perform are, therefore, the duties of his station in life. Every man must do his own duties as defined by his nature and social status. To do these even imperfectly is far better for a man than to do another man's duties as perfectly as possible. The one course leads to the perfect life, the other is fraught with danger and leads nowhere (III.35; XVIII.45, 47).

There are two ways in which we may perform our duties in life. We may be guided in our actions by an insatiable desire to attain the pleasures of life like wealth, power, name and fame. Actions in which the motive is the desire for pleasure for oneself are called Sakama or selfish. Such selfish actions plunge the mind into a state of distraction and restlessness. The mind being tossed about by strong passions and desires for the innumerable objects of sense loses its balance and power of concentration (II.41-44). Further, an irrational and incessant search for pleasurable objects tends to stupify the mind and paralyse its normal powers. Too much brooding over things of sense is bound to produce a strong passion and greed for them which, if not satisfied, lead to fear, anger and infatuation. These in their turn impair a man's memory and intellect, and spell ruin to him (II.62-63). With the mind thus diseased, a man loses all peace and happiness in life (II.66). Hence to do one's duties for the sake of future gain or with the desire for pleasure is not the right way of doing them. Morality is not a search for pleasures or desirable consequences of one's actions. The Bhagavad-Gita re-

commends the performance of one's duties in a spirit of selfless service as the morally perfect way. What we have to do is to perform all the duties that pertain to our station in life without any desire or concern for the consequences of our action. One should do his duties in a spirit of detachment from the results or fruits of his actions. If it be my duty to fight for the independence of my country, then I must do it without any regard for the actual result that may follow. The thought of success or defeat should not trouble me, for that does not lie in my power but in many other forces over which I have no control. It is such Nishkama or selfless action that makes us free from fear and anger, pleasure and pain, vice and sin. It leads us beyond good and evil, perfects our self and helps us to realize God (II.39-41, 47; III. 19-20).

This is the ideal of Karma-Yoga as inculcated by the Bhagavad-Gita. It represents the middle path between irrational selfish activity on the one hand, and a dull life of inactivity on the other. He who attains this ideal is not goaded to any immoral activity by his passions and impulses, nor does he cease to act altogether. He performs all the works which pertain to his station in life as his sacred duties without any desire for the fruits of his actions. He is neither elated by success nor depressed by failure, and takes the consequences of his actions with a good grace and an unperturbed mind. Much mystery has, however, been made of this ideal of selfless activity. It has been declared by some critics to be an impossible ideal. They think that it is not possible to do any work without a desire for some good result. Action without a desire for some good effect is empty of all motive, and a motiveless action cannot be. While it is true that

a rational action cannot be motiveless, it is false that the desired result of an action is its real motive. The real motive of a rational action is the end to which it is directed and which it seeks to realize. The idea of a good end is sufficient to move a rational being to act and strive to attain it. We can never be sure of the effects or consequences of our actions even when we know that they are directed towards some good end. Hence it would be wiser for us to act for the realization of good ends without much or any concern for the fruits or effects of our action. If this be so, then the ideal of selfless performance of one's duties ought to be followed by all in their moral life. The duties of life are so many good ends sanctioned by morality and religion. As such, the very idea of duty has in it a moving power which induces us to act in conformity with it. What frustrates the idea of duty is our passions and impulses. Even the natural desire for the expected results of our action often proves to be a hindrance rather than a help towards the performance of our duties. An over-anxiety for the fruits of our action does but clog our activities. A demand for previous assurance of the success of an action would preclude the possibility of the action itself. The idea of Karma-Yoga in the Bhagavad-Gita is not only feasible but also indispensable for our moral life.

Although the ideal of Karma-Yoga is not impracticable, yet it is by no means easily attainable. For ordinary men it is perhaps the most difficult task to act without any hope of reward, and to remain unaffected by the success or failure of any act. Who among us can view pleasure and pain, gain and loss, success and defeat in the same dispassionate spirit? Love for pleasurable objects and hate for painful ones are

the ruling passions of our life. Desire for what is pleasant and aversion towards what is unpleasant are instinctive in our nature. So long as we are under the sway of these natural desires, passions and impulses, the ideal of Karma-Yoga remains an idle dream for us (III.37). To realize this noble ideal we have to illumine our intellect by the light of knowledge and purify our mind by devotion to God. Right knowledge of the self and devotion to God are recommended by the Bhagavad-Gita as the means of attaining the moral ideal of Karma-Yoga. While selfish Karma or irrational activity brings about the soul's bondage, actions performed in the light of the knowledge of self and faith in God lead to liberation. Karma or action belongs properly to the body and its organs. So also pleasure and pain, love and hate, desire and aversion are affections of the mind. The self is neither the body nor the mind. It is the pure, free and immortal spirit which is distinct from the body and the senses, the mind and the intellect. But when the self fails to distinguish itself from the body and mind, and identifies itself with the limited ego or 'I' (Ahamkāra), it becomes subject to all the affections of the mind-body system. It is only when the self thinks of itself as 'somebody' with a certain name, that it seems to act and to suffer and enjoy the fruits of its actions. If and when the self realizes its distinction from the mind-body complex and transcends the limitations of the ego, it becomes free from the desires and passions of our natural life. It remains as much unaffected by the happenings of the mind-body as somebody remains untouched by the joys and sorrows of somebody else (III.27-28). With this realization of the self as free, immortal spirit, we are elevated to a position in the moral life where we may act in a spirit of self-

less service without any desire for the fruits of our actions. But self-realization leads by a natural process of development to realization of God. The discovery of the immutable, immortal self is the discovery of God. When the self is revealed to a man he finds himself in the presence of a conscious, infinite being who dwells in man and nature, and controls and guides them from within. God is the indwelling supreme spirit in man and nature, the origin and end of both. Man or the individual self is that aspect of the supreme self which owns a body and mind, and enjoys objects of the world through the senses. Nature or the physical world is the manifestation of the Divine power in the form of the five elements and the mind, ego and

intellect (VII.4-7; XV.7-9). With the knowledge of God as the ultimate reality, and the creator, ruler and destroyer of the world-order, the attitude of the individual self is one of faith and trust, devotion and resignation to Him. He considers himself to be the servant of the Lord and dedicates his life to the service of God. He becomes free from the sway of the passions and impulses, and performs the duties of his life in a calm, dispassionate spirit. He acts indeed, but has no attachment for the fruits of his actions, for these he dedicates to God (III.30). Karma-Yoga as a moral ideal thus brings in its train the realization of self and God, which is man's highest good.

INDIA'S EPOCHS IN WORLD-CULTURE*

BY PROFESSOR DR. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR

I feel greatly honoured, sir, by your presence here to-night. I am really very happy to come into contact with some of the most distinguished representatives of the Nagpur public in the course of my short sojourn in this city. Though the time at my disposal was short I made it a point to halt here for twenty-four hours on my way back from Bombay and I am grateful that it has been possible with the help of the Ramakrishna Mission to spend a few pleasant hours here in your midst in a manner that is likely to be useful to me.

I should like at once to say that I come to you as a learner, as a mere bookworm. It has ever been my privilege to make use of every oppor-

tunity that arises to build up my moral and intellectual personality. I may observe likewise that my object has always been to mobilize the spiritual enrichment and cultural wealth that I pick up from contacts with diverse individuals or groups in the interests of the expansion of knowledge for my country as well as for the world.

The subject chosen for this evening's talk is: *India's epochs in world-culture*. I take it that most of the persons present here have interested themselves in culture and world-culture. Very many of you have tried to define the epochs of culture for yourselves and I am sure that everybody has some conceptions, perhaps some definite views, about India's place in world-culture, about

* A lecture delivered extempore at Nagpur under the auspices of the Ramakrishna Ashrama with Mr. T. J. Kedar, Vice-Chancellor, Nagpur University, as Chairman.

India as one of the makers of world-culture. What I propose to do this evening is simply to contribute to these conceptions in my way and convey to you a bit of what I may have thought out in the course of my studies, investigations, researches and publications.

It is good for me to begin by saying that as an intellectual my ideas are in a perpetual flux. I do not believe in any *idées fixes*. I do not have fixed grooves of thinking and therefore it is not my intention to inflict upon you any cut and dried ideas. Such ideas especially as are likely to be accepted without challenge are not the commodities in which I deal. At the same time I should also say that I am a thoroughly non-political animal, if a non-political animal there can ever be. And therefore it is impossible for me to subscribe off-hand to any views that may be expressed by political organizations, commercial or industrial associations, social institutions, religious communities, parties, sects, denominations, etc. Party shibboleths have no meaning for me. My way is that of looking at things as a student of science. I am a mere intellectual and as such it is not my concern to convince others of the utility or importance of my way of looking at things. It is enough if I have the liberty just to describe my way to others. In other words, I am not particularly anxious that what I may be saying should be agreeable to the persons who happen to be present here.

Perhaps, as a rule, it is the policy or interest of speakers, writers, publicists and intellectuals to get as many people as possible to their ways of thinking. Fortunately or unfortunately, it has been my mentality to be quite otherwise. I feel happiest when I find myself opposed to every human being. Whatever I may have done in Europe, America and Asia, and of course in Bengal and other parts

of India before learned societies and universities and in the journals of scientific associations and academics has been but to invite the attention of scholars to certain points of view and certain facts, certain data and statistics, certain observations and interpretations such as may have been ignored by others in the course of their investigations. The acceptance of my views and ideas is not my chief concern. I should rather say that I am in my element when I find myself in the minority of one. Therefore it is not in order to seek popularity for my ideas or to get a chance to distribute my ideas among all and sundry or broadcast them in a popular manner that I am here to make your acquaintance. I am happy to find myself here because I believe that by contact with many creative personalities it may be possible for me to get certain reactions, certain orientations, such as are perhaps as the poles asunder and entirely different from mine.

To-night our first subject is culture or world-culture, our second subject is the epochs of world-culture and our third subject is India as an epoch-maker in world-culture. Now culture or world-culture has been defined by many persons in many ways. I define it in my way. You do not have to accept it. You are at liberty to reject it.

CULTURE = CREATION AS DOMINATION

There are academicians, philosophers and publicists, both in East and West, who cannot feel happy unless they make a distinction between culture and civilization. I am not one of them. In my vocabulary culture and civilization are identical terms. The distinction is generally made in Germany where *Kultur* is taken to be more profound, more creative and more substantial than civilization. In France, as a rule,

scientists and *les hommes des lettres* fight shy of the word 'culture.' To them the sweetest word is *la civilisation française*. Italians are like the French in this respect. Italy does not care for *la coltura* so much as for *la civilizzazione*. In English thought the custom continues to be more or less French although the German term and ideology were introduced by Matthew Arnold among others. American intellectuals have not gone in definitely for one way or the other. They use culture and civilization indifferently. Those contemporary Euro-American sociologists or philosophers who want to exhibit their up-to-dateness in German vocabulary, especially the ideologies propagated by Spengler, have to refer to the distinctions observed in Germany by way of preliminary observations. But they virtually ignore them as they proceed unless they happen to be exponents of the Spenglerian or some allied thesis.

To me culture or civilization is nothing but my Sanskrit or virtually all-Indian *Krishti*, *Samskriti* or *Subhyata*. It is a synonym for the creations of man, whatever they are, good, bad or indifferent. I do not attach any moral significance to the word. My culture or civilization is entirely unmoral, carrying no appraisal of values, high or low. I take it as a term describing the results of human creativity. It is desirable to be clear about it at the very outset. Most probably the ideas of most of you are radically different from mine.

Any creation of man being culture, the most important item in it is the force behind culture, the culture-making agency, the factor that produces or manufactures culture. The analysis of culture or civilization is nothing but the analysis of man's creative urges, energies or forces. It is the will that creates, it is the intelligence that

creates, and perhaps likewise it is the emotion that creates. The first thing that counts in the human personality, in the individual or group *psyche* is the desire to create. And the second thing certainly is the power to create. In culture or world-culture I am interested in this desire of man and this power of man to create.

It is the nature of human creativity to be endowed with interhuman impacts, good or bad. Social influence is to be postulated of creation as such. Every creation exerts automatically an influence upon the neighbourhood. The influence may be beneficial or harmful. The creation is perhaps only the production of a food plant, a cave-dwelling, an earthen pot, a song or a story. But the creator influences the neighbour as a matter of course. His work evokes the sympathy or antipathy of the men and women at hand or far off. It thus dominates the village, the country and the world, be the manner or effect of domination evil or good. Creation is essentially domination. To create is to conquer, to dominate. No domination, no creativity.

The desire and the power to dominate is then the fundamental feature in every creative activity, in every expression of culture. In every culture we encounter the desire to dominate and the power to dominate. The quality, quantity and variety of men and women who have the desire and the power to dominate set the limits of the culture-making force in a particular region or race. In order to be able to make a culture or possess an epoch in world-culture a region or race must have a large number of varied men and women effectively endowed with this desire and power to dominate.

The term 'world' in world-culture is not to be taken too literally so as to encompass all the four quarters of the

universe and all the two billions of human beings. The smallest environment of an individual is his world. As soon as he has created something his culture has influenced the neighbour. It may then be said already to have conquered the world and made or started an epoch. It is clear that the words, conquest and domination, are not being used in any terroristic, terrifying or tyrannical sense. There is nothing sinister in these words, nothing more sinister at any rate than in the words, influence or conversion.

Once in a while, or very often, it may so happen that while your creation or culture is influencing, converting, conquering or dominating your neighbour, his creation or culture is likewise at the same time influencing, converting, conquering and dominating you. This sort of mutual influence, mutual conversion, reciprocal conquest or reciprocal domination is a frequent, nay, an invariable phenomenon in inter-human contacts. Hardly any religious conversion of a large group in the world's history has been one-sided. It has as a rule led to a give-and-take between two systems of cult. Acculturation or the acceptance and assimilation of one culture by a region or race of another culture furnishes innumerable instances of this mutuality in domination or reciprocity in conquest. But that the essential item in culture is influence, conversion, conquest or domination is however never to be lost sight of.

The position is, then, very simple. Whenever, this man over here or that man over there, be in a position to influence another man, his neighbour, I say that the other man has been converted or conquered by this man. Whenever I find that one group of human beings has made an invention or a discovery and when that invention or that discovery has been accepted by

another group as an invention or a discovery that is likely to be useful to itself, I say that the first group has made an epoch in world-culture.

I should like to describe my position in the words of some of the forefathers, the fathers' fathers, and greatgrandfathers of our Indian races. It so happens that the mentality which I possess in regard to culture, world-culture and the making of world-culture is the mentality of young India during the Vedic period. One of the Rishis, one of the nearly thousand poets of Vedic India, has a passage, a verse like the following. Man (Purusha) is describing himself to the Earth (Dharitri) in the following manner:

*Ahamasmi sahamana
Uttaro nama bhumyam
Abhisadasmi vishwasad
Ashamasham vishvasahi*

This is what a poet of the Atharva-Veda says about man's place in the world. 'Mighty am I,' says Man to the Earth, 'Superior (Uttara) by name, conquering am I, all-conquering (Vishwasad), completely conquering every region.'

This is my conception of culture, the urge, the force, the spirit behind world-culture—the agency that has brought about epochs in world-culture. My conception appears to have been prominent in the mind of one of the oldest poets of the Indo-Aryan world.

This conception of the making of epochs was also shared by no less a world-figure than Shakyasimha the Buddha. The Pali *Sutta-nipata* has a Sela-Sutta. Here we find Buddha declaring himself as follows: 'A king am I, the king supreme of righteousness. The royal chariot-wheel (Chakra) in righteousness do I set rolling on—that wheel that no one can turn back again.' Buddha was but employing the vocabulary of his contemporaries,

the statesmen who were attempting to become Raja-Chakravartins or Sarva-bhaumas (world-rulers) in the political domain. His creative imagination or will, intelligence and feeling was harnessed to Digvijaya (the conquest of all directions). He was self-conscious enough to understand that his creation, the wheel, had encompassed the world. Buddha is thus seen continuing the tradition of the Vedic Rishis in regard to the making of culture.

Our poet Kalidasa can also be quoted as an illustration of the point of view that I maintain as regards culture and the making of cultures. Look at the wonderful heroes of Kalidasa's *Raghuvamsha*. What were Raghu, his ancestors and successors in Kalidasa's imagination? They were

Asamudrakshitishanam

Anakarathavartmanam

Kalidasa's creations were nothing short of

'Lords of the lithosphere from sea to sea

Commanding the skies by chariots of air.'

They were, in one word, world-conquerors, rulers of rulers, bent on and capable of establishing *pax Sarva-bhaumica* (peace of the Sarva-bhauma or world-monarch) corresponding to the *pax Romana* of those days in the West.

The Vedic Rishi, Buddha and Kalidasa, all thought alike. Their mentalities I am exhibiting to you simply as illustrations or specimens from old India of my idea of culture as a function of the desire and power of man to dominate the world. I should like to caution you once more to the effect that I do not want you to accept my views. My views are my views, your views are your views, and to me this is an end of the matter.

MILITARY-POLITICAL IMPERIALISM

Everybody studies history and interprets world-developments in his own way. Each one of you present here has his own view of history. Not only the businessmen, the lawyers, the learned scholars, and the distinguished politicians have each his own view but the young men also whom I have always considered to be the real leaders and history-makers even while young have each to be credited with his own interpretation of the march of events from epoch to epoch. And so have I my interpretation of history. Perhaps our interpretations may not be identical—and yet you may find it useful to know once in a while what a man, who like me happens to find himself often in the minority of one, has to say about the world's history. Now, therefore, as I see it, culture is nothing but domination. You dominate me, or I dominate you. This is the way of the world. There is nothing else. Either I conquer you or you conquer me. World-culture can be understood only in terms of domination, domination by the individual, domination by the group, domination by the race, people or state. The entire civilization of mankind can be interpreted in terms of this domination.

In my vocabulary domination or conquest, let me repeat, is not a dangerous category. It is akin to conversion or influence. Let me, then, proceed with the analysis of domination as a social fact, as an historic phenomenon in the relations between individuals or groups. If we begin to classify the dominations or conquests known in the history of the world, it appears to me that they can be grouped in two different orders. The first is the physical domination of one race by another. To it belongs the military conquest of one country by another, the political sub-

jugation of one people by another. The government of one country by another country is one kind of domination. This is generally known as imperialism, imperialism of the political-militaristic order.

Now there is another kind of domination, imperialism or empire-building. And this consists in the conversion of a people that has a particular system of ideas to another system of beliefs, ideas, etc. It is a conversion, a subjugation of one set of ideas and ideals by another. It consists in a transformation of the morals, manners, sentiments, laws, etc., of one people, race or region by the moralities, spiritualities, arts and sciences, etc., of another people, race or region. This is also an imperialism or domination.

Thus there are two kinds, orders or systems of imperialism. One is the political-militaristic, the other is the ideological world-domination. Epoch-making in culture can belong either to the one or to the other system of imperialism. Illustrations of both these types of imperialism are to be found among the experiences of the Indian people or peoples, as among those of certain other peoples in the world.

In regard to the military-political imperialism I shall take up the Western world first. You and I have been taught to believe in schools and colleges and through the journalistic world by political leaders, that the Western races do not make slaves among themselves and that they but conquer the East. The militarist-political domination of one people by another is not alleged to be in the European traditions. Europeans and Americans are supposed to be peoples who have never known the subjugation of one race by another, the militarist-political domination of one country by another and so forth. This is the exact opposite of historic reality.

I shall give only one illustration. Let us for instance take England. The people of England was conquered by foreign peoples oftener than once. England was a foreign-dominated country for hundreds of years. England is in Europe and the peoples that conquered England were the peoples of Europe. The history of England for nearly a thousand years was off and on the story of the government of one people by another. England belonged to the race of subject nations, to the group of slaves who could be governed by foreigners as a 'cattle farm,' to use an expression from the British philosopher, John Stuart Mill. For quite a long time, as everybody now will recall, England was a slave of the Romans. This Roman rule in Britain was an illustration of imperialism of the militaristic-political type. To be precise, the Romans ruled Britain for nearly three hundred and fifty years. The 'Barbarian' or Teutonic conquests also were foreign conquests, and followed hard upon the Roman domination. The Danish rule was likewise a foreign rule. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries again it was the French people who ruled England. This island was the colony of western France from the Somme to the Pyrennes. The Norman and Angevin Dukes or zemindars of western France who were the 'vassals' of the Kings of eastern France were the rulers of England.

Hundreds of similar instances can be quoted. I do not want to take your time unnecessarily. Take any historical atlas of Europe and you will be satisfied that from the earliest Greek and Roman times until to-day Europe has ever been a continent of races or peoples governed by foreign races or peoples. Militaristic-political domination has been an eternal feature in the destiny of Europe.

Europeans have not always been used to respecting the liberties of other Europeans. The tug of war between European peoples for the military-political domination of European territories is one of the permanent items in the history of world-culture. The peoples of Europe have also known for quite long centuries the militaristic-political subjugation by non-European, e.g., Asian races, peoples or nations. The domination of southern and eastern Europe by the Arabs, Mongols and Turks is too patent a fact in the annals of civilization.

Let us now come to the East. In regard to Asia also we have been taught to believe that imperialism of the militaristic-political type was unknown in her tradition. Our forefathers on the banks of the Ganges and the Godavari, the Indus, the Tigris, the Euphrates and the Nile, the Hwangho and the Yangtze are alleged to have been non-militaristic in their outlook and view of life. Many of us have been seriously believing that the Orient has never known the subjugation of one people by another people. Such beliefs are so palpably untrue to facts that they should be treated with contempt as but hallucinations. My mentality is the furthest removed from such beliefs. The historic reality is that the Asians were as adept and happy in establishing militaristic-political domination as the Europeans. There was no difference between them on this score.

Well, what about our own country, India? It is said that we here in India are used only to Ahimsa. This notion is being preached from house-tops by certain sections of Indian philosophers, Indian statesmen and Indian historians. If some one over here were to declare that for five thousand years from the epochs of Mohenjodaro and the Rig-Veda down to Tipu Sultan, Baji Rao and

Ranjit Singh, our fathers, grandfathers and greatgrandfathers were only counting beads and cultivating Ahimsa, the tendency among a large body of intellectuals in India to call him a philosopher of the first rank would be very obvious. Not to fight, to be worthless in secular matters, to fail in worldly wisdom were the characteristics of ancient and medieval Indians according to these philosophers of the first rank. This is the mentality also of a very large number of European and American scholars known as orientalists, who try to din into the ears of students at Oxford, Cambridge, New York, Berlin and Paris that Indians were wonderful metaphysicians exclusively interested in 'the other world' and utterly incompetent to manage the things of here below. You are at liberty to cultivate this mentality. But let me have a little bit of our factual history.

I shall draw attention only to one or two periods of Indian life from Mohenjodaro down to 1850, to see whether any generation was unsecular, unmilitaristic and unpolitical. The wars of the Vedic period are too well known. If the Rishis of ancient India understood anything they understood killing, burning and destroying. They were the last persons to cultivate Ahimsa. Let us come down to the Maurya Empire (323-185 B.C.). This was established 160 years after Shakyasimha (Buddha) who is known to have preached the cult of Ahimsa. This empire was, as is well known, larger than the British Empire of to-day. But do you once in a while realize—those of you who are philosophers and metaphysicians—that this empire was the domination of one race over many races? Do you ever try to understand that this empire was nothing but the subjugation of different peoples and different regions by one particular people and one particular

region? Yes, it was a domination, a foreign domination, from top to bottom as long as it lasted. You know quite well that the Maurya Empire is older than the Roman Empire. Thus it is clear that it is our forefathers, the Hindus, who, inspite of 160 years of Buddha's teachings, preceded the Romans and all subsequent Europeans in the matter of establishing domination over foreign peoples and countries. Imperialism of the militaristic-political type belongs to the irreducible minimum of ancient Indian culture.

Let us, then, take one particular sovereign of this Maurya Empire, our great, beloved and enlightened monarch Asoka. We are told that Asoka was a paternal ruler. In one of his edicts he calls the people his children. Paternalism is a good virtue and is to be respected as such. Now, about his conquest of Orissa. Tremendous bloodshed, we are told, was the price of this conquest. We are told also that Asoka shed bitter tears over this calamity. I take it for granted that he shed tears at this bloodshed. For, after all, we are human beings. And it is human nature as a rule to sympathize with people in their miseries. In modern wars also kings and presidents of republics shed tears over the casualties occurring even among the enemies. It is, further, the custom to offer prayers and garlands at the tombs of *le soldat inconnu* (the unknown soldier) in all countries. Asoka's tender sentiments must have been touched on the occasion of the Orissan horrors. Here, however, as students of history we should be careful enough to note that in ancient times warfares were not very serious

affairs in regard to bloodshed. Actual killings could hardly be numerous. Most of the casualties were in the nature of maimed bodies. The ankles, we may believe, might be sprained, the jaws half broken, the muscles swollen, the noses bleeding, and so on. Those wars were very akin to physical exercises and sports. All the same, Asoka's tears are not to be overlooked.

But did Asoka make Orissa free? Did he grant Orissa any 'dominion status' or some sort of *Swaraj* and self-rule? No. Instead of doing anything like this he swallowed Orissa and annexed it to the Maurya Empire. This gives another proof of the fact that Indians are as capable of political domination or militaristic imperialism as the Europeans. There is hardly any difference as human beings between East and West.

Indians were not more moral and more spiritual than Europeans, and Europeans were not more militaristic, more materialistic, more power-loving and domination-loving than Indians. And therefore the philosophy that is to-day very popular in India, the metaphysics by discussing which you and I can get recognized overnight as brilliant philosophers, the ism which says that there is a fundamental difference between the East and the West in regard to outlook on life, life's viewpoints and world-conceptions are entirely fallacious. You are at liberty to be philosophers and ism-holders of that type, I am not anxious to join your crowd. This, as I said, is the end of the matter so far as I am concerned. I am not here to convert anybody to my view of life.

(To be continued)

THE VEERASHAIVA WELTANSCHAUUNG

BY SWAMI SRI KUMARA, B.A.

Veerashaivism is generally considered to be a phase of the Agamanta. In the twelfth century Karnatak witnessed an unprecedented revival in Veerashaivism. The precursor of this revival was Sri Basawa, the Prime Minister to a Jain king named Bijjala who ruled over Kalyan (1157 to 1167), a city of historic importance, about sixty miles from Gulburga in the Nizam's dominions. The magnetic personality of Sri Basawa attracted towards him persons of all shades and sympathies from all parts of India, ranging from the prince to the peasant. As a consequence there was an assembly of about three hundred Veerashaiva saints and mystics whose sayings in Kannada language stand unrivalled in point of gracefulness of melody, forcefulness of movement and peacefulness of mystery. It is gratifying to learn that there were about sixty women mystics in that assemblage—amongst whom was Akka Mahadevi, the beacon-light. The pithy and powerful sayings of these Veerashaiva mystics or the Sharanas as they are called are compared sometimes by great scholars like the late Mahamahopadhyaya R. Narasimhacharyaru to the sayings of the Upanishadic seers. The sayings of these Sharanas, i.e. the supermen of the Lingayat Faith, then, are spontaneous and a direct outcome 'of the divine afflatus springing from within, the result of inspiration through God-intoxication.' Hence they breathe the spirit of a God-intoxicant one, characterized by redeeming love and refreshing knowledge. Although Veerashaivism is a phase of

the Agamanta, it underwent radical changes in the hands of Sri Basawa and his colleagues to such an extent, that it became Lingayatism—the special Faith of the Karnatak Veerashaivas—the philosophy of which will be our immediate concern.

Robert Arch defines philosophy as the attempt to think rigorously and consistently about the world which undeniably is there. But the world as it exists in our normal consciousness is a duality which the intellect obstinately refuses to resolve into a unity. It presents a 'higher' and a 'lower' aspect, an abstract or transcendental region and a concrete or definable one, or in other words it represents the higher term spirit and the lower term matter which the formal mind refuses to resolve into an inexpressible sense of harmony and unity. Seeing, then, that these two regions or poles actually exist in our normal consciousness, we must at least postulate that there is a reconciliation between the two. And the deeper mind in us intuitively feels that there must be some link between the spirit or the higher transcendental region of our nature and the matter or lower necessitous region of time, space and causation. So it seeks a term which will admit both, cover both and identify both. It demands not an elimination of either but a reconciliation.

What is that term which connects and co-ordinates spirit and matter? It is in the words of Indian philosophy Mahat or Brihat, the cosmic consciousness; and cosmic becomes real to

spirit and spirit becomes real to matter and the dualism between them breaks down. If we refuse to recognize this connecting and co-ordinating link between spirit and matter, the two must appear as irreconcilable opponents bound together in an unhappy wedlock and their divorce, the one reasonable solution. This Mahat or Brihat is one and indivisible in essence but in manifestation it becomes a complex rhythm, a scale of harmonies, a hierarchy of states or movements. This hierarchy is composed by a descending or involutive and an ascending or evolutive movement of which spirit and matter are the highest and the lowest terms. Between these two terms or creations is an eternal manifestation, taking them together is the world or the organization of consciousness of which the Infinite Truth of things is the foundation. 'There dominant individualization no longer usurps the all-pervading soul and the foundation of consciousness is its own vast totality arranging in itself individualized movements which never lose the consciousness of their integrality and total oneness with all others. Multiplicity no longer prevails and divides, but even in the complexity of its movements always refers back to 'essential unity and its own integral totality.' This world or organization of consciousness is therefore called 'Mahalinga'—the Divine Static, in Veerashaiva philosophy. It is this Mahalinga that is the Shiva of the Shaivas, the Brahman of the Upanishads, the transcendent Reality of the ontologists, the God of the gnostics and the Absolute of the philosophers.

The Absolute, says Bradley, is supra-personal; the absolute says Bosanquet is teleological; combining these two views the Veerashaiva mystic or the Sharana says that the Absolute is the impersonal personality; that it is at once transcen-

dent and immanent, static and dynamic. The static aspect of the Absolute is called Sthira, Shiva or Linga; and the dynamic aspect of the Absolute is called Chara, Shakti or Jangama in Veerashaiva philosophy. This Chara or Shakti is the dynamic divine Will which is the personality of the Absolute Truth or Shiva Linga, for the Shvetashvataropanisad describes this Will as the very soul of the Lord hidden in the modes of its own workings. This divine Will exists, therefore, in the Absolute Truth by the relation of identity, i.e. Samarasya which has been expressed very vividly by the Sharanas in their sayings and one of the sayings of Sri Basawa in this connection runs thus:—'As submarine fire is hid in the waters of the seas, as a ray of ambrosia is hid in the moon, as fragrance is hid in the flower, as affection is hid in the maidens, so is Truth hid in the heart of Will, O Lord of the Spiritual Unification.'

It is this integral association of Shiva-Shakti or Shakti-Vishishtadvaita that is the Veerashaiva 'Weltanschauung'—the world-view of a Veerashaiva. For he views the whole world as the expression of the Divine Will under the stress and guidance of the Divine Static and holds that there is only one Chit-Shakti—the integral conscious power of the Divine spirit—to characterize which modern science is still fighting shy. Even the Western philosophers are at a loss to define it. Belfort Bax calls this Will an allogical element and as such he stresses the allogical element of feeling against the Hegelian tendency to find in thought or knowledge the sole foundation of the real. This is an approach, in some respects, to the position taken up by Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann, but without those thinkers' pessimism. Emphasis on the 'allogical' has been carried to more sensational conclusions by Henri Bergson who denies

altogether the ultimate validity of intellectual judgements. For him as for Schopenhauer, the thing-in-itself, whether in man or in external nature, is irrational impulse—the *elan vital*. But the nature of this *elan vital* remains in Bergson somewhat vague and undefined. He calls it the 'vital fluid' the cosmic force of which the whole universe is the play. He conceives life to be a stress and a stir, but to the Sharana it is a constant urge of the Dynamic Divine. He does not draw his inspiration from the unconscious prompting or the sub-conscious ideation in man like Bergson. But he draws his philosophical inspiration from the height of the supramental superconscious force, i.e. Chit-Shakti. In this the Sharana is nearer to Schopenhauer than to Bergson. Will in Schopenhauer is the primal reality which objectifies itself in the form of ideas. He can see that Will lies beyond the realm of Platonic ideas and necessarily is superior to logical reasoning. He has the philosophic genius to see that Will is more dynamic than personal and hence the idea of reason cannot appeal to him. But he has not the insight to see the static and transcendent aspect of consciousness, which is called Mahat or Brihat in Indian philosophy. His philosophy has, therefore, removed the ordinary localization of change to a centre.

The Sharana allows Will or Shakti a very significant position no doubt; he makes it the supreme principle of expression. But Shakti in Veerashaiva philosophy has a locus in Shiva. He therefore emphasizes the integral association of Shiva and Shakti, Linga and Jangama, Truth and Will. He characterizes this inseparable unity in terms that attract by their sublime simplicity and rich suggestiveness. The former is supracosmic transcendence, the latter is the cosmic unity, the one is the infinite

silence and the other is immanent sublimity. Between these two the Sharana has attempted a synthesis by saying that cosmic Will or Shakti is the manifestation of the supracosmic Reality or Shiva which it really transcends. The cosmic Will has no absolute existence, it is in fact the concentration of the transcendence; being a concentration it is more seeming than real, it is relatively real. This divine Shakti is therefore conceived as creative, conservative and destructive from the cosmological view-point; as redemptive from the theological view-point; and as suprasubject from the epistemological view-point. But Shiva transcends this immanent sublimity or Shakti. It is the Infinite luminous silence—the silence that resides in the heart of all things. It illumines all but itself as an object always eludes our grasp. This silence is the plenum of being and consciousness; it is also the delight of freedom. This infinite luminous silence or Mahalinga has the sense of 'fullness without content, completeness without growth or fruition, freedom without tension or resistance.' And the Will moves in the sphere of this luminous silence, in the atmosphere of supreme awareness. It is therefore an outflow from the Supreme, a divine movement of the Eternal and an immanence inherent in the Infinity. What science calls matter and energy, what metaphysician calls subject and object, are only the bipolar expressions of this Divine Will. And it is this Shakti that expresses finer forms in the gradual unfoldment of Life which accounts for the different kinds of energies set in a hierarchy, physical, vital, mental and even supramental.

The transformation of the physical, vital and mental under the influence of the Mahalinga or the Divine Static and their movement and functioning in the Divine Dynamic are the great pro-

mise of the Veerashaiva philosophy. The spiritualization of matter is a great advance in the Lingayat Faith. Plato seeks supreme satisfaction and felicity in the realm of supersensible ideas, for to him the impress of matter upon the soul is tormenting. The Bible maintains an apparent duality or polarity of our nature and keeps spirit and matter eternally apart, treating matter as illusion and spirit alone as reality. The Vedanta and the Sankhya equally condemn the movement of ignorance and seek rest in transcendence. It is true that an attempt has been made in the Vedanta to make the life's movement conceived in spirit, but the Vedanta by allowing a distinction between the relative and the Absolute and finally, by totally denying any possible synthesis between the two, emphasizes the uniqueness of the Absolute and its realization and does not harmonize dynamic spirituality with transcendent quietism. Even the Agamas extol Shiva-hood as the final consummation of life; the supersensible is set against the sensible and a division between spirit and matter is conceived to exist. But in the synthetic philosophy of Veerashavism, the integral association of Shiva-Shakti cannot allow any division to subsist between spirit and matter; hence in the Lingayat Faith the divinization of life is considered as the desirable end or consummation.

The obliteration of the division between spirit and matter, the sensible and the supersensible introduces a new meaning into spiritual life and values. Matter is eternally plastic and with the touch of spirit it dissolves its stiffness and exhibits its pliability, so that it can be a safe instrument for spiritual expression. In fact matter is an illusion of intellect. From the standpoint of life there is no matter but only the play of spirit through different grades of ex-

pression. It is indeed a kind of illusion to think of the division between body and mind, and humanity has long suffered under that illusion. The supramental Force or Chit-Shakti is the only reality and if with the different thought-currents the nervous system is affected and the tone is changed, then there is no wonder that the Transcendent as Energy can spiritualize the flesh and remove the sense of materiality. The spiritual is the real and the material is at bottom spiritual. Because we are accustomed to think in terms of intellect, we are committed to this kind of dualism. Bergson has truly said that intellect represents in a statical form what is really living and dynamical and if, instead of taking our guidance from intellect, we take our inspiration from life, the cast of existence would appear fundamentally different. Bergson is the protagonist of intuitionism and he would admonish us to look at life from the view-point of intuition. Viewed in this light what happens? Matter ceases to exist. If we succeed in setting aside this inertia, materiality will disappear and life will present to us an aspect of dynamism.

This possibility of spiritualizing matter makes the connection between heaven and earth direct. The kingdom of God is not to be sought beyond but here. The true spiritual effort lies then not only in the striving after transcendent existence but in making matter the channel of expression of spirit. In this connection it is pertinent to quote the sayings of Sri Basawa which run thus:—'Indeed he cannot be a superman so long he labours under the illusion that there is a demarcating line between heaven and earth. . . . And the earth is, as it were, a mint managed by God—those who deserve well here, deserve also well there.' The whole movement of life is directly related to the transcendent

Energy; for, by being thus related the movement grows in fullness and perfection. Hence the minutest events have a setting in the cosmic life; and in the Lingayat Faith the meaninglessness of life and its illusion are replaced by its richness and actuality. Nothing in life is meaningless, nothing in it is purposeless, since every movement in life is the expression of bliss and beatitude and their so called uneventfulness or discord originates from their isolation from the whole setting and our inability to read the divine purpose in life.

To the Sharana Reality is then not only Divine puissance but is also divine History. The Reality urged by an inner divine compulsion evolves the whole world out of itself, and in the course of evolution it reveals the divine purpose through different phases of life. This position is similar to that taken up by Croce and Gentile, the Italian philosophers, who insist on the ultimate reality of time and on the extreme importance, therefore, of history as the progressive attainment of self-consciousness by the world-spirit. The world-process then, in Veerashaiva philosophy is not an illusion but an integral play. In introducing this conception of the integral play into the ultimate Reality, the position of the Sharana becomes somewhat different from the extreme transcendentalism of Shankara on the one hand and from the theistic position of Ramanuja and Chaitanya on the other. In Shankara's philosophy Lila or play is a concession to the theological attitude. In Vaishnavism a distinction is made between the Antaranga Lila and the Bahiranga Lila. But to the Sharana Lila or play is the very soul of Reality; it is the expression of dynamic fullness in integrity. He views life in its

entirety as ever creative and ever complete; and the joy of completeness is the joy of harmony, for in the infinite life which is ever complete and ever accomplished the sense of harmony is never lost. Even if there are changes—and there are incessant changes in infinite life—they take place according to the law of harmony.

Spiritual dynamic fullness is the greatest conception in Veerashaivism. In Indian thought dynamism of life has not received due recognition. Even in the Tantras and the Agamas which are considered to be the repository of dynamic spiritualism, an attempt is made to transcend all forms of dynamism however fine. But the Veerashaiva philosophy lays stress on the dynamism of spiritual life and the transfiguration of every movement of life through the instrumentality of Ishta-Linga (Ishta-Linga is an ideal of Infinity which the Sharana or the superman of the Lingayat Faith always wears upon his breast) is indeed unique. This uniqueness has introduced into the Veerashaiva system which is called Shatsthala, the ideal of divine transfiguration and spiritualization of all the forces in man in place of liberation. To the Sharana, then, liberation or emancipation is not the ideal. The greater ideal is life and its divinization. Emancipation presupposes an eternal conflict between life's possibilities and spirit's transcendence, and makes the former meaningless. The setting of the immanent beauties and sublimities equally loses force with life's stirrings and formations. Though the Sharana denies the conception of emancipation in the usual sense still he is fully alive to the supreme puissance of life in divine Ananda. He conceives a state in life when every movement will be spiritual and the finest peace of soul shall be

established in the greatest movement of life: The free repose will be enjoyed in the transparent light and intrepid activity. In this greater ideal which the Sharana calls the Sarvangalingasthala, all the beauties and harmonies of the

Divine Life are thrown open to man and every movement of life will be felt as divine. Life is to be completely divinized and humanity should be installed in a divine society. This is the promise of Veerashaiva philosophy.

ETHICS AND RELIGION

BY SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

(Concluded from the May issue)

The identity of the individual self with the Infinite is the fundamental teaching of the Vedanta. That this is the metaphysical background of ethics has been indicated in such passages of the Vedantic literature as these:

‘He who sees all beings in the very Self and the Self in all beings, in consequence thereof abhors none’ (Isha Up. 6).

‘The knowers of the Self look with an equal eye on a Brahmana endowed with learning and humility, a scavenger, a cow, an elephant, or a dog’ (Bhagavad-Gita V. 18).

‘With imperfections exhausted, doubts dispelled, senses controlled, engaged in the good of all beings, the seers obtain absolute freedom’ (Ibid. V. 22).

‘Since seeing the Lord equally existent everywhere, he injures not the Self by the Self, and so goes to the highest goal’ (Ibid. XIII. 28).

It is interesting to note that the great philosopher Schopenhauer and the well-known Orientalist Paul Deussen have also recognized the oneness of all souls as the rational basis of ethics. Thus observes Schopenhauer in his *The Basis of Morality* :

‘My true inmost being subsists in every living thing just as really, as directly, as in my own consciousness it is evidenced only to my self. This

is the higher knowledge, for which there is in Sanskrit the standing formula Tat tvam asi—“That art Thou.” Out of the depths of human nature it wells up in the shape of compassion, and is therefore the source of all genuine, that is, disinterested virtue, being, so to say, incarnate in every good deed. It is this which in the last resort is invoked whenever we appeal to gentleness, to loving-kindness; whenever we pray for mercy instead of justice. For such appeal, such prayer, is in reality an effort to remind a fellow-being of the ultimate truth that we are all one and the same entity.”

The following remarks of Paul Deussen are no less pertinent:

‘The gospels postulate quite correctly as the highest law of morality: Love your neighbour as yourself. But why should I do so, since by the order of nature I feel pain and pleasure only in myself, not in my neighbour? The answer is not in the Bible (this venerable book being not yet quite free from Semitic Realism), but it is in the Veda, in the great formula Tat tvam asi—“Thou art That,” which gives in three words all of metaphysics and morals. You shall love your neighbour as yourself because you are your

¹ Translation by A. B. Bullock, chapter: ‘The Metaphysical Groundwork.’

neighbour, and mere illusion makes you believe that your neighbour is something different from yourself.”²

So religion takes an altogether different position. It proposes a complete abnegation of the ego as a means of self-realization and self-fulfilment. The more we cling to the ego, the more we lose our self and the greater is our bondage. The more we sacrifice the ego, the more we realize our self and the greater is our self-expansion. When we can apprehend this, there is no longer any difficulty in identifying ourselves with others. The individual interests become as a matter of course identical with the common interest. The failure to effect a reconciliation between the individual and the common interest is the one root cause of all antagonism between individualism and socialism. All conflict of democratic and totalitarian ideologies stem from this. And the only way to eradicate it is to transform the individualistic outlook by spiritual understanding. As the outlook will broaden, we shall consider it a privilege to do good to others. The egotistic attitude of kindness will give way to that of service. We shall no more clamour for our ‘rights’ but concern ourselves with our ‘dues.’ We shall feel that we owe to the world much more than the world owes us. The religious spirit of Hindu sociology substituted ‘dues’ for ‘rights,’ and enjoined a fivefold daily duty (Pancha Mahayajna) on every householder for the discharge of his fivefold debt to the universe, to wit, duty to the Deity, duty to the seers and the sages, duty to the forefathers, duty to humanity, and duty to other living beings. Here the individual life is conceived as an organic part of the univer-

sal life. It is needless to say that such change of attitude is the most effective way to harmonize the varied interests of individuals in the social life.

To do good to the world we need a right standard to evaluate good. Religion provides us with just such a standard. Every value in this world is relative. There are differences of kind, quality, and quantity. There are economic values, intellectual values, aesthetic values, moral values, spiritual values. Any of the values can be judged as higher or lower, greater or smaller, according to our standard of judgement. As we have no fixed standard, there is always a confusion of values, creating chaos in our individual and collective life. It is only by referring them to the ultimate good that relative values can be properly appraised and a right scale of values formulated. And this is what the world needs for its guidance to-day.

That the greatest good is our ideal nobody will perhaps deny. But according to religion the greatest good is the ultimate good, the absolute good, perfection itself. It does not exist in the relative plane. The Spirit alone, the Unconditioned, the All-free, is perfect. He is the Self of all. Any one who realizes Him becomes one with Him and thus becomes perfect. Whatever helps us forward to this ideal is good. The more it does so, the higher it is.

In doing good to others the quality as well as the quantity of good must be considered. According to the Hindu ethical standard the giving of spiritual knowledge (Jnana-Dâna) is the highest of all gifts. Next to this is the giving of secular knowledge (Vidya-Dana). And next to this is the giving of life (Prana-Dana). Lowest is the giving of food (Anna-Dana). Nothing but spiritual knowledge can solve permanently the problem of human wants and suffer-

² *The Philosophy of the Vedanta* published by Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, India.

ings, so it is considered to be the highest. But as long as we shall not be able to recognize the Ultimate Good beyond relativity as the supreme end of life, as long as this sense-bound world of time and space will appear to us to be the highest order of reality, economic values will inevitably occupy the first rank in our scale of values, and all such human interests as religion, philosophy, arts, and science, however proud we may be of them, will exist only as subservient to the material needs of life.

To *do* good, one has to *be* good. But unfortunately we are more anxious to do good to others than to be good ourselves. It is better to be good without doing good than to do good without being good. Modern ethics with its pragmatic outlook emphasizes *doing* good; religion emphasizes *being* good. Even for him who has to minister to the physical needs of others, it is essential to be morally pure; only to be equipped with the necessary technical knowledge and material requisites is not enough. Otherwise he will do much more harm to society than good. And this not infrequently happens in this world. He who lives a pure life is a great benefactor of society, even though he may not render it any apparent active service. The potent influence of his noble thoughts and deep feelings for all uplifts many knowingly or unknowingly.

And what is it, after all, the world needs most? Is man's economic need greater than his moral need? Does man make money or money make man? Can a man with inner strength, peace, and purity ever starve in this world? Human nature is at the back of all progress and all degradation. All problems rest for their solution on the inner goodness of man. If this is lost, nothing can save the world. No laws,

no economic adjustment, no political ideologies, no social systems, are of avail if human nature does not improve. Religion takes care of this above all. The purer a man, the greater is his influence on the lives of others. The highest purity can be attained only by the realization of the Divine Self. He in whom the urge for perfection becomes so strong that his entire mind goes towards the search of God and God alone, and loses all initiative to do good to others in its tremendous struggle to attain the Ideal, may not have accomplished anything from a worldly point of view; yet such is the power of his life and thought, such a sublime atmosphere his earnestness, wisdom, humility, and love create around him, that people, drawn by its mysterious force, flock to him for enlightenment, benediction, guidance, and solace, even though he may have repaired to the most sequestered place. The lotus blooming in the depth of the forest, sweet and serene, sends no invitation to the bees to come to itself to extract honey. By mere thoughts, good wishes, or words he opens many hearts and turns even the depraved into selfless workers of society. His life and words become a fountain-head of inspiration of many noble thoughts and humanitarian deeds after his death for years to come.

It is very often argued: 'Can we not be pure and virtuous without struggling for God-vision, without seeking after that formless, nameless Being that passeth human understanding? Is it not enough to live honestly and do our duties faithfully and efficiently? Is not this life sufficiently rich, varied, and meaningful to engage our thoughts? Why worry about the Beyond? We want more of life. Religion makes us lose interest in this life. Religion negates life.' Such are the views ex-

pressed even by many leaders of thought in modern times. Strange as it may seem, most young men and young women of the world think this way. It is true that religion takes into account the Great Beyond, but this does not mean that religion negates life or makes us other-worldly. Can we understand this life without referring it to what is beyond? Is this life complete in itself? Is it self-explanatory? Has it not a beginning and an end far beyond what we perceive? Our life here is but one small link of the infinite chain of our existence. It has a past. It has a future. We cannot know the present without knowing the past and the future. This universe, a series of causes and effects, has an Ultimate Cause. The manifest is only a speck of the Great Unmanifest. We can understand the seen only in relation to the Unseen, the finite only in relation to the Infinite, the changeful only in relation to the Changeless. This is exactly what religion proposes to mediate. It tells us to regulate life's journey in view of the ultimate goal, to utilize the relative values of life as instrumental to the attainment of the Supreme Good, to conduct this transitory bodily existence so as to restore us to the eternal life of the Spirit. Certainly this is not the negation of life. This earthly life is not an end in itself. One has to go beyond it in order to reach the goal. To neglect the affairs of life or to be drowned in them is equally wrong. Religion teaches us how to transcend them. The best use one can make of this life is to utilize it as a means to the highest end.

There is inherent in man a longing for the Real. He cannot rest satisfied with the impermanence of things. However immersed he may be in the affairs of the world, however hard he may try to be contented with the fleeting joys of life, his heart yearns for something which can

bring him enduring peace and fulfil all his desires. No temptation, no sophistry, can smother this craving for the Eternal in man, though for the time being it may lie buried under the weight of adverse conditions, internal as well as external. It is this innate necessity that installs religion in the heart of man. It is the special function of religion to lead man from untruth to Truth, from darkness to Eternal Light, from death to Immortal Bliss. To release the spirit from the bondage of matter in order to establish man in the pristine glory and blissfulness of the Self, is the aim of religion. It is wrong to say that religion is other-worldly. It is equally wrong to suppose that religion is for this world. The main purpose of religion is to reinstate man in his lost spiritual kingdom, which is beyond all worlds, that is to say, in his Infinite Self, beyond the domain of matter, beyond time and space, beyond relative existence. For this it is not necessary to go to any other world; one can realize it even here while living in this body. Religion confers on us material benefits as well by evoking our best virtues and faculties. But these are incidental, the by-products of religious living. 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you' (Matt. VI. 33). Religion should be judged by its special function and not by the subsidiary results.

There are, however, not a few in this age who miss the true meaning and purpose of religion and measure its usefulness by its social value. Religion is the way of Truth. Why should it conform to social life? Is social life an ideal in itself? Is it ultimate that everything should be modelled after its pattern? Truth is above all. Truth will not pay homage to society. Society has to pay homage to Truth or die. Society must conform to the religious ideal. The

more it does so, the higher it is. That is the ideal society where the conditions are most favourable to the realization of the Supreme Ideal by its individual members. It is child-mentality to think of religion only as an instrument of material welfare. 'What is it good for if it cannot make me toys?' remarked a baby while looking at a very valuable scientific instrument.

But such is the hold of this sense-bound world on our imagination that even men of great importance cannot conceive of any higher purpose of religion than to subserve the interests of the earthly life. Their religion is 'world and life affirmation.' Some of them have gone so far as to assert the superiority of the Western religious ideals over the Oriental religious ideals by this life-affirmation test. According to them Christianity is world and life affirming; Indian religions are world and life negating. It is apparent from the foregoing discussion that no religion is life affirming or life negating in which they use the expressions. No religion holds this life to be the be-all and end-all of existence. No religion cherishes the illusion of perfection in this world of duality. Every religion directs you to a goal beyond. In this sense every religion is other-worldly. The kingdom of God is within you. It is not of this world. But at the same time no religion tells you to neglect or ignore this life. In every religion there is a place for worldly duties, there is a place for social service, there is a place for the joys of life; yet no religion wants to keep you earth-bound but leads you beyond. This life has a meaning only when it is directed to a transcendent goal. It is worth living only when it is inspired by the supreme spiritual Ideal. Of course, in judging religions we should consider the genuine form of each religion and

not its aberrations. To say that Christianity stresses this earthly life and its values and not the life beyond is to miss the true spirit of Christianity. If it be so, it is not Christianity as taught by Jesus Christ, who said, 'He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal' (*John XII. 25*). It seems to be neo-paganism masquerading as the religion of Jesus. Indeed, no religion is characterized by this 'world affirmation' spirit. It may be the true character of realism or humanism but not of religion. It is in no mean degree responsible for the growing secularization of religious thought and life in these days.

Such as think that Hinduism is life-negating will do well to study the Hindu scheme of religious life, which consists of a twofold way, the way of world-experience (*Pravritti-Mārga*) and the way of renunciation (*Nivritti-Marga*), intended for the realization of the fourfold values or objects of life (*Purushārtha*), namely ethical value (*Dharma*), economic value (*Artha*), aesthetic value (*Kama*), and the Ultimate Value, or Freedom, or the Supreme Good (*Paramapurushārtha*, *Moksha*, or *Nishchreyasah*). The Hindus have not denied any aspect of life or any of its values but have adjusted all into a complete scheme of life with the Supreme Good as its goal. The following observations of Prof. Max Müller are to the point: 'After lifting the Self above body and soul, after uniting heaven and earth, God and man, Brahman and Atman, the Vedānta philosophers have destroyed nothing in the life of the phenomenal beings who have to act and to fulfil their duties in this phenomenal world. On the contrary, they have shown that there can be nothing phenomenal without

something that is real, and that goodness and virtue, faith and works, are necessary as a preparation; nay as the *sine qua non* for the attainment of the highest knowledge, which brings the soul back to its source and to its home and restores it to its true nature, to its Selfhood in Brahman.²³

It is to be noted that in the Hindu scale of life-values the ethical values are the basic and not the economic values. Biologically the economic values are the primary values of life. But man should secure even the essential needs of life by the right performance of duties. So Dharma or ethical conduct has first place in the scheme of values. Dharma in a wide sense implies the Law which upholds the universe and all beings and things. It is Dharma (the observance of the Law) which leads to the welfare of all here and hereafter. Or that which leads to the welfare of all here and hereafter is Dharma. It is said in the Mahabharata: 'By Dharma are people upheld. That which upholdeth is verily Dharma. He who is the friend of all beings, he who is intent on the welfare of all in thought, word, and deed, alone knoweth Dharma' (Shanti Parva, Moksha, 88). In a restricted sense Dharma means ethical conduct or duty. The householder's Dharma consists mainly of two types of work, namely, Ishta and Purta. Ishta indicates the fivefold daily duty which I have already mentioned. Purta indicates humanitarian deeds, such as the making of water tanks, wells, canals, etc.; the establishment of temples, alms-houses, and rest-houses. It is said in the *Manu Samhita*: Ishta and Purta steadily performed with earnestness and devotion, by means of

wealth earned by honest means, leads to immortal bliss' (IV. 226).

So we see social service has a distinct place in the Hindu scheme of life. But it is not the finale. Social work does not solve life's problem. Man must be awakened to higher consciousness, must learn to conquer animality by divinity, to free the soul from the bondage of the flesh, to overcome the body idea by spirit consciousness. Otherwise you will open clinics but not solve the problem of disease; extend relief measures but not solve the problem of misery; develop machinery but not solve the problem of want; make laws but not solve the problem of crime; conclude peace treaties but not solve the problem of war. Moral observance, too, is not adequate to cope with the situation. Man must be aware of his spiritual self. As long as the body idea dominates the mind, one cannot but have the sensuous outlook on life. Only when spirit consciousness prevails in man do his thoughts and actions become naturally pure. He becomes moral by inner urge. Moral conduct is of real value when it is the self-expression of inner consciousness.

Morality cannot be the ultimate end of life. There is no perfection on the moral level. Morality works in the plane of duality, where justice and wrong, mercy and misery, forgiveness and fault, coexist. Perfection is in the spirit which is beyond all dualities. Besides, however advanced a person may be in the moral life, he cannot get rid of the evil in him. The vices overpowered by the virtues lie dormant in him but do not die out. The dark forces exist in the unconscious in subtle forms, but never become extinct. This is also true of the spiritual aspirant. It is only when the seeker has the direct vision of Truth that all

²³ *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*. Chapter IV: 'Different Ways of Studying Philosophy.'

the subtle forces of evil in him, with their root cause, primal ignorance, become extirpated never to appear again. 'The knots of the heart are cut, all doubts disappear, and the impressions of Karma die out when is realized the One who is transcendental and immanent,' says the Mundaka Upanishad (II. 8). It is said in the Bhagavad-Gita, 'Sense objects fall away from the abstinent man, leaving the subtle attachment behind. On seeing the Supreme, his subtle attachment, too, vanishes' (II. 59).

He who realizes the Supreme goes beyond law. 'What rule, what injunction, can there be for him who is beyond duality? (Nistraigunye pathi vicharatah ko vidhih ko nishedhah),' says the great Indian sage, Shukadeva, with regard to him who attains the transcendental experience of the One without a second beyond all multiplicity. Yet what he does is according to law. Morality becomes the spontaneous expression of his Self-realization. 'An expert dancer never takes a wrong step,' says Sri Ramakrishna. There is no law for the free. Law implies bondage. It is for the bound. An immoral man transgresses law, a moral man observes law, a man of realization transcends law. Morality finds its culmination in spiritual perfection.

Such as realize 'the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self' naturally become filled with love for all. Rooted in the consciousness of the One, they see the many. High or low, ignorant or wise, virtuous or sinful, towards all they are equally compassionate. They are never callous to the sufferings of the world. They bless all, pray for the welfare of all. But all of these

enlightened ones do not work for the good of humanity, though they find no contradiction between such work and spiritual realization. It depends on the nature of their personalities. Some are of a quiet type, others are of a dynamic type. The sphere of action of the former is generally limited within the small group of individuals that contact them. In the history of all great religions there are these two types of illumined souls. The characteristics of the illumined workers have been thus described by Shankaracharya in his *Vivekachudamani*:

'There are pure souls, calm and magnanimous, who do good to the world spontaneously as does the spring, and, who, having themselves crossed the dreadful ocean of life, help others also to cross it, without any motive whatsoever.

'It is the very nature of the great-souled to move of their own accord towards removing others' troubles, even as the moon voluntarily soothes the earth parched by the flaming rays of the sun' (37, 38).

The Vedanta speaks of some rare personalities among the illumined workers who even discard or put off their final emancipation and are born from time to time to render service to all beings. They are called *Adhikârika Purushas* (persons having special capacity to do good to the world). The highest examples of the illumined workers are, of course, the great world-teachers such as Sri Krishna, Buddha, Jesus Christ, Shankaracharya, and others. It is in their lives and the lives of other illumined workers that we find the consummation of ethical and religious ideals.

THE SUPREME QUEST

BY KUMAR PAL, M.A.

Man starts life with a keen sense of insecurity and hankers after peace which he feels as if he has lost. The infant craves for its lost position of undisturbed rest and omnipotence which it enjoyed in the womb. It is mere pessimistic sense of future and sheer disappointment in the sorrowful present that has inspired the poets and artists and even some psychologists in depicting their sweet memories of boyhood and indulging in eulogies of the early heaven. None is, strictly speaking, more insecure and pitiable than the little baby thrust upon a cruel world from its blissful felicity of the womb.

Yet there is some grain of truth in this general tribute to the potentially would-be hero of men and possibly the leader of humanity. No doubt, the child has the largest number of wants and cravings, unknown to himself or his well-wishers, which are for the most part daily frustrated and unfulfilled. Nevertheless the small kid has the fewest limitations and determinations. All conceivable channels are open to him for the satisfaction of his desires. The childlike innocence is really the innocence of the uninformed. The infantile bliss is virtually the bliss of ignorance and dependence.

The older the man grows the fewer become the possibilities open to him. The further does the child move on the path of life the more the alternative roads are reduced in number. One day of our life brings death one day nearer. The acquisition of one thing reduces the number of desired objects by one

and numerous others of the same type. In order to satisfy his craving for security and peace, arising from the sense of insecurity in the natural surroundings, man first of all quite naturally looks to outer aids. He sets his goals in the external world. But in due course, there comes a time when man exhausts all avenues and finds all the possible outer helps to be quite valueless for his purpose. Some persons may very early realize that the whole paraphernalia of the world is inadequate to ensure the desired peace, on account of some hereditary unknown reasons. One with a sensitive mind may possibly detect misery and pain even in the so-called pleasures of the world. Severe affliction and disappointments may meet him in his pursuits. Or else man may himself grow too weak and incapacitated for the achievement of his desires and then he may wisely and earnestly try to relinquish them instead of running after them and stumbling headlong at each step. Or finally, man may be perfectly contented with his past accomplishments, wealth, family, name, etc. He may have no further incentive, no more ambition in the world to strive for. And yet he does not find the lasting peace which he seeks. So he may, at length, think of retiring from the stiff struggle of society to see if he can find peace elsewhere or in any other way.

For some reason or other out of so many enumerated here, sooner or later (in this life or the next) the interest in the external world slackens.

The former charms no longer attract man. As a matter of fact, the worldly pleasures cease to be pleasures. In short, there comes a critical moment or a turning point in life, when he becomes averse to the world. Howsoever much one may wish apparently to prolong the tenor of his transient terrestrial tenement, he is bound, at some juncture, to feel in his heart of hearts a genuine disgust with all that is this-worldly—first, with his office, position and status which he is obliged to leave for other younger, newer and perhaps generally more competent competitors; secondly, with his wealth and acquisitions which are being usurped and partitioned by his descendants mostly against his will; then, in the third place, with his family (wife and children) whom he has either begun to despise because of their disregard for him in his dotage and their non-compliance with his standards and wishes, or if not, whom he has to leave willy-nilly; and lastly, with his worn out, diseased and cracked physical body, which is no longer able to stand the harshness of the environment and is incapable of rendering any service to him. These very objects which set him on the track of pursuit, now repulse him. After Virakti, Pravritti changes into Nivritti. Wide interests now give place to disinterestedness. It is important to note here that what was the last to be acquired in life is the first to disappear and the first one is last discarded.

This fourfold Nivritti, retirement from four directions, is generally not a purely negative return. It is not a retracing of the same path. It is more appropriately a departure from it, another novel approach to his long-cherished desire for perpetual peace and happiness, rather than a mere abandonment

of the pursuit. If this world does not provide for a lasting and perfect peace, (एकान्तिकात्यन्तिक दुःख) he looks elsewhere for it. This new road, too, soon leads to a parting of the ways. Some persons not thoroughly disillusioned by the evil in the world, or who regard release from it impossible, expect and prepare for a better and more pleasant state of reincarnation in this world by performing pious deeds. Others believe that there are much better worlds (Lokas) to enjoy and so they observe numerous rituals for the propitiation of the gods who, they think, preside over them. Both these types of men are in fact still enchanted by worldly joys and delights. They merely try to obtain a better bargain (स्वर्ग) or a longer lease for the same (पुनर्जन्म).

There are other very few persons who long for eternal freedom from the bonds of evil and pain. They are also divided in so far as some of them have a lingering hankering after unalloyed pure pleasure which they wish to enjoy in eternity (सगुणसुक्ति), and others have not even the slightest shreds of attachment to either pleasure or pain. They consider the very limited existence of the individual here, hereafter in heaven, or in eternity as inherently full of suffering. Therefore the aim of such dispassioned ascetics (Vairagins) is to annihilate all individual existence, to submerge the individual in the Supreme, unlimited existence, or a reinstatement of that primal state of peace and equilibrium which is free from pleasure and pain (आनन्द), where there is nothing beside it or outside it to limit it (परम दुःख) and from where there is no coming back.

In Freudian terminology this has been called the Death Instinct. But in fact this is not a reinstatement of

the inorganic inanimate state as Freud characterized his Death Instinct, although there is a close apparent resemblance. This should rightly be regarded as a reversion to the most primal and indeterminate state (अव्यक्तसत्) of mere existence, Being which is at

the same time supreme bliss in itself (आनन्द) and intelligence par excellence (चिद्). It has baffled not only Freud as he confesses, but in fact, was considered indescribable and incomprehensible even by Secrs and Mystics of all ages and areas.

SWAMI YOGANANDA

BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

(Concluded from the previous issue)

To recount another incident of a similar type. Once Yogin found that Sri Ramakrishna was very much perturbed over the fact that his share of the consecrated food of the temple was not sent to him. Usually the cashier of the temple would distribute the food offered in the temple, after the worship had been finished. Being impatient Sri Ramakrishna sent a messenger to the cashier and afterwards he himself went to him to enquire about the matter. Yogin was proud of his aristocratic birth. When he saw Sri Ramakrishna agitated over such a trifle, he thought that Sri Ramakrishna might be a great saint, but still his anxiety at missing the consecrated food was the result of his family tradition and influence: being born in a priest-family he was particular about such insignificant things.

While Yogin was thinking this way, Sri Ramakrishna came and of his own accord said: 'Rani Rasmani arranged that the consecrated food should be distributed amongst Sadhus. Thereby she will acquire some merit. But these officers without considering that fact give away the offerings at the temple to their friends and sometimes even to undesirable persons. So I am

particular to see that the pious desire of that noble lady is fulfilled.'

When Yogin heard this, he was amazed to see that even an insignificant act of Sri Ramakrishna was not without a deep meaning, and felt ashamed at the opinion he formed about Sri Ramakrishna.

Yogin began to grow spiritually under the keen care of Sri Ramakrishna. Afterwards, when Sri Ramakrishna fell ill and was under medical treatment at Shyampukur and Cossipore, Yogin was one of those disciples who laboured day and night in attending to the needs and comfort of their beloved Master. Too much strain due to this told upon the none too strong health of Yogin, but the devoted disciple was undaunted.

Sri Ramakrishna was sinking. No amount of care on the part of the disciples could arrest the progress of the disease. His life was despaired of. One day Sri Ramakrishna called Yogin to him and asked him to read out a certain portion of the Bengali almanac to him. In doing this, while Yogin came to a certain date, Sri Ramakrishna bade him stop. It was the date on which Sri Ramakrishna passed away.

The Mahasamadhi of Sri Ramakrishna threw all his disciples into a deep gloom. They now laid still greater stress on spiritual practices in order to fill up the great void in their heart. The Holy Mother went to Brindaban and remained almost day and night absorbed in meditation. Yogin along with another disciple, Latu, was with her in attendance. At this time Yogin also performed hard Tapasya.

After a stay for a year at Brindaban, the Holy Mother returned to Bengal and stayed in a house on the bank of the Ganges near the present site of the Belur Math. There also Yogin was her attendant. In fact, Yogin's service to the Holy Mother was wonderful. In looking after the comfort of the Holy Mother, Yogin threw all personal considerations to the wind. For, did he not see the living presence of the Master in her? Then to serve her with all devotion and care, thought Yogin, was his best religion.

Some time in 1891 Swami Yogananda went to Benares. There he spent his days in hard Tapasya. He lived in a solitary garden-house, absorbed in spiritual practices. It is said that during this period he would grudge the time to be spent even for taking meals. He would beg his food—some pieces of bread—one day and for the following three or four days these pieces of bread soaked into water would constitute his whole meal. During this time there was a great riot in Benares. But Yogin commanded such a respect in the vicinity that rioters on both sides would not even disturb him. The hardship which Yogin was undergoing was too much for his constitution which broke down completely. Swami Yogananda never regained his normal health. But when the mind is given to God, what does it matter if the body is ill or well?

Yogananda found supreme bliss in his inner world, so the physical illness would not disturb his serenity of mind. From Benares he returned to the Math at Baranagore. He was still ailing. But his bright, smiling face belied his illness. Who could imagine that he was ill, when he would be seen wholeheartedly engaged in fun and merry-making with his beloved brother disciples!

When the Holy Mother came to Calcutta, Swami Yogananda again became her attendant. He spent about a year in devoted service to the Holy Mother. After that he stayed chiefly at the house of Balaram Bose in Calcutta. He was now a permanently sick person—a victim of stomach trouble. But he was the source of much attraction. So much was his amiability that whoever would come into contact with him would be charmed with him. One would at once feel at home with him. Some young men who got the opportunity of mixing with him at this time, afterwards joined the Ramakrishna Order and became monks.

Swami Yogananda was the first to organize a public celebration of the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna on a large scale. It was performed at Dakshineswar. The success of this celebration against tremendous odds was due to the great influence of Swami Yogananda over men—specially the younger generation. The organizing ability of Swami Yogananda was evidenced also when a grand reception was given to Swami Vivekananda in 1897 on his return from America. Swami Yogananda was the moving spirit behind that.

After his return to India, when Swami Vivekananda gave his proposal of starting an organization to his brother disciples, Swami Yogananda

was the person to raise protest. His contention was, Sri Ramakrishna wanted all to devote their time and energy exclusively to spiritual practices, but Vivekananda, deviating from the Master's teachings, was starting an organization on his own initiative. This provoked the Great Lion too much and made unconsciously reveal a part of his inner life. Swami Vivekananda feelingly said that he (meaning himself) was too insignificant to improve upon the teachings of that spiritual giant—Sri Ramakrishna, that if Sri Ramakrishna liked he could create hundreds of Vivekanandas from a handful of dust, but that he made Swami Vivekananda simply a tool for carrying out his mission, and Swami Vivekananda had no will but that of Sri Ramakrishna. Such astounding faith of Swami Vivekananda in Sri Ramakrishna stunned all that were present there, and had the effect of winning over Swami Yogananda immediately.

When the Ramakrishna Mission Society was actually started Swami Yogananda was made one of its office-bearers. This was not the only occasion when Swami Yogananda showed the power of individual judgement and a great critical faculty by challenging the very leader—Swami Vivekananda, though his love for the latter was very, very deep. Indeed, one who dared examine the conduct of his Guru with a critical eye, before fully submitting to him, could not spare his Gurubhai. So whenever Swami Yogananda differed from Swami Vivekananda, he was bold enough to say that straightforwardly.

Two years after the incident referred to above, with reference to Swami Vivekananda's starting an organization, a similar thing happened. Swami Vivekananda was accused by his Guru-

bhais of not preaching the ideas of their Master. For Sri Ramakrishna insisted on Bhakti and on the practice of Sadhanas for the realization of God, whereas Swami Vivekananda constantly urged them to go about working, preaching and serving the poor and the diseased—the very things which force the mind outward. Here also Swami Yogananda started the discussion. At first the discussion began in a light-hearted mood on both sides. But gradually Swami Vivekananda became serious, till at last he was choked with emotion and visibly contending between his love for the poor and his reverence for the Guru. Tears filled his eyes and his whole frame began to shake. In order to hide his feelings Swami Vivekananda left the spot immediately. But the atmosphere was so tense that none dared break the silence even after the Swami had left. A few minutes after, some of the Gurubhais went to the apartment of Swami Vivekananda and found him sitting in meditation posture, his whole frame stiff and tears flowing from his half-closed eyes. It was nearly an hour before the Swami returned to his waiting friends in the sitting room, and when he began to talk, all found that the love of Swami Vivekananda for the Master was much deeper than what could be seen from a superficial view. But Swami Vivekananda was not allowed to talk on that subject. Swami Yogananda and others took him away from the room to divert his thoughts.

Swami Yogananda again became the attendant of the Holy Mother and stayed with her in Calcutta. But as he was too weak to attend to all her works, a young monk was taken as his assistant. When the Holy Mother was in Calcutta, naturally many ladies would flock to her. Seeing the situation Swami Vivekananda once took Swami

Yogananda to task for keeping a young Brahmacharin as his assistant; for if the celibate life of the latter was endangered who would be responsible? 'I,' came the immediate reply from Swami Yogananda, 'I am ready to sacrifice my all for him.' The words were uttered with so much sincerity and earnestness that everyone who heard them could not but admire the large-heartedness of Swami Yogananda.

In 1898 Swami Yogananda organized the birthday celebration of Sri Ramakrishna in a place near Belur, as it could not be held at Dakshineswar for various reasons. This was the last birthday celebration of Sri Ramakrishna, which Swami Yogananda could attend. For, in the next year—in 1899, on March 28th, he passed away. Swami Yogananda was the first among the monastic disciples of Sri Ramakrishna to enter Mahasamadhi.

His passing away was wonderful. His words before death were: 'My Jnana and Bhakti have so much increased that I cannot express them.' An old Sannyasin brother who was at the bedside at the solemn moment said that they felt all of a sudden such an inflow of a higher state of being, that they vividly realized that the soul was passing to a higher, freer and superior state of consciousness than the bodily.

Swami Vivekananda was greatly moved at the passing away of Swami Yogananda and feelingly remarked,

'This is the beginning of the end.'

Outwardly the life of Swami Yogananda was uneventful. It is very difficult to give or find out details through which one can see his personality. Only those who moved with him closely, could see a fraction of his spiritual eminence. One of the younger members of the Math at that time wrote with regard to him, 'He was such a great saint that it fills one with awe to belong to the Order that contained him, even as the youngest member.' Swami Yogananda commanded great love and respect from all the lay and monastic disciples of the Ramakrishna Order. He was one of those whom Sri Ramakrishna spotted out as 'Ishvarakotis' or 'Eternally perfect,'—one of the souls which are never in bondage but now and then come to this world of ours for guiding humanity Godwards.

It is about four decades since Swami Yogananda passed away. Many of the younger monks of the Ramakrishna Mission have not even seen him, but the sacred memory of that great Swami is a supreme inspiration to one and all. With how much devotion do they utter his name, and with what great eagerness do they hear even a trifling incident of his life! He has occupied a large part of their heart. Such is the influence of that noble life, though silently lived.

"Extreme longing is the surest way to God-vision. One should have faith like that of an innocent child and such longing as a child has when it wants to see its mother."

—Sri Ramakrishna

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE PERSISTENCE OF SPIRITUAL VALUES

The religious culture of ancient Egypt and Greece have become forgotten chapters of human history but the religion of the Vedas and the culture in which it has manifested itself are living and vigorous and bid fair to spread outside the bounds of this country and help humanity as a whole to walk in the path of the spirit. Wherein lies the secret of the eternal youth of the Vedic religion? What about Christianity? Will its future be that of the ancient pagan religions which it superseded or will it persist as the Vedic religion? These questions are discussed by Professor Pratt of the University of California, in a learned essay published under the title 'Why Religions Die?' The *Indian Social Reformer* reprinting a portion of Professor Pratt's essay comments upon it editorially under the heading 'The Vitality of Religions.' We extract the following from the said editorial: 'The vitality of a religion consists in there arising from time to time men to confirm and to correct from their own experience the truths enunciated by those who preceded them. Religions perish when the springs of experience run dry. The Vedic seer asserted that he spoke from experience and so did Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Professor Pratt observes that he notes some signs of a dying religion in Christianity and recommends that it should follow the Vedic way and not the Egyptian way in order to prolong its life. Christianity surely has but few exponents to-day who speak from direct experience. The word "experience" is banished from the Christian religious vocabulary. Building

hospitals and schools is a good thing but it does not go to feed the religious spirit. . . . Modern Christianity has come to be predominantly a way of works, often a blind alley as in mass conversions. The element of knowledge and the element of loving devotion or faith are very much in the background and are often totally neglected. It has furthermore entangled itself with political governments and economic institutions. In Great Britain and the United States it claims democracy as its own issue. In Spain it is the mainstay of Falangism. Not only is it unconscious of its own danger but it seeks actively to undermine other religions which are better provided with the three essentials of religion.'

It appears to us that the social institutions of a people provide the *milieu* in which their living culture exists and thrives. Religion is only one of the factors that shapes this *milieu*. Economic and political factors to a great extent govern the day-to-day life of social groups. A life of contemplation is possible on the banks of the Ganges but under existing conditions it is unimaginable on the banks of the Rhine and the Danube. The universities which originally came into being to provide the necessary environment for soul-culture and higher mental culture have deteriorated into factories for the mass production of men with a certain type of 'efficiency' to meet the public demand for trained men to carry on administrative and other functions. The higher values of Christianity have to be conserved for the good of humanity. The *Ashrama* movement sponsored by some Christian missionaries and laymen may be a start in the right direction provided

there is a change of heart, accompanied by a breaking away from the 'way of works' in order to retire into solitude and be alone with God.

We quote the following from Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's Conversations. 'Shambu told me, "I have a great desire to set up some hospitals and dispensaries so that there may be some relief to the poor." I replied, "Yes, it is good if you can do it without any personal motive. But it is very difficult for one devoid of sincere devotion to God to be perfectly selfless. Moreover, if you are involved too much in work you are very likely to be caught unawares in the meshes of desires. We often think, when we undertake a work, that we are doing it quite disinterestedly, but we do not know how the desire for name and fame has already crept in. Moreover, excessive work leaves one no time to think of God and thus makes him forgetful of Him." I told him further, "Shambu, let me put you a question. If God appears before you what will you ask of Him? Will you ask for some hospitals and dispensaries or for a perpetual vision of Him? Nothing else can attract you if you see Him once." Those who build hospitals and dispensaries and take delight in them are, no doubt, good people. But they belong to a different class. A man of pure devotion wants nothing but God.'

THE AIM OF EDUCATION

In the course of the Convocation Address delivered at the Gurukula University, Saharanpur, Dr. Rabindranath Tagore made the following observations: 'The love of man has its own hunger for knowing. Even if we lack this concerning our fellow beings in

India, except in our political protestations, at least love of knowledge for its own sake could have brought us close to each other. But there also we have failed and suffered. For weakness of knowledge is the foundation of weakness of power. Until India becomes fully distinct in our mind, we can never gain her in truth; and where truth is imperfect, love can never have its full sway. The best function of our educational centres is to help us to know ourselves, and then along with it their other mission will be fulfilled which is to inspire us to give ourselves.'

'To know ourselves,' and 'to give ourselves' do, indeed, sum up the whole process, the end, and purpose of all education, both religious and secular. All knowledge is ultimately self-knowledge, and all virtues have their culmination in willing self-abnegation that leads to true self-realization. The idea of Yajna (Sacrifice) being the sustaining force of creation is elaborated in the scriptures of the Hindus.

Again, to know ourselves is to know our Motherland. The past, the present and the future of India, her culture and traditions, her people, their present condition, and all other related questions are summed up in the formula 'To know ourselves.' Such knowledge evokes love for the thing known and also the power for ministering unto it. The knowledge becomes complete when love manifests itself as the surrender of all possessions for the service of the beloved. Educators, social reformers, administrators, and all others who labour for social and national uplift would do well to ponder deeply over this beautiful formula given by our poet.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SRI SARADA DEVI. (THE HOLY MOTHER). *Published by the Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. Pp. 532. Price Rs. 3-8 As.*

Once Sri Ramakrishna said to one of his young disciples who, out of excessive zeal for monasticism, expressed a feeling of abhorrence for women, 'Why should you hate a woman? Certainly that is not the way to fly away from her. And, after all, why should you hate her? She is the Divine Mother—Her earthly manifestation. Worship the Mother in her and she would be propitiated. He who is face to face with Reality, who is blessed with the vision of God, does not regard woman with any fear. He sees her as she really is, the image of the Divine Mother of the Universe. So, he not only honours and respects woman but actually worships her as a son does his mother.' This great ideal of man's relation to woman was practically demonstrated in the divine life of Sri Ramakrishna and his spiritual consort Sri Sarada Devi. He looked upon his wife as the manifestation of the Goddess Kali, and finished his long Sadhana of twelve years by giving the final offering of worship at her feet. The Hindu scriptures enjoin upon all to look upon women as the manifestations of the Divine Prakriti or the Great Cause of the Universe. In these pages is published, for the first time in English, a comprehensive account of the life and conversations of one whose mission it was to reveal the Motherhood of God to humanity. Sri Sarada Devi or the Holy Mother—by which name she is more generally known among the followers and admirers of Sri Ramakrishna—was born in 1853 of poor Brahmin parents at Jayrambati, an obscure village in the district of Bankura in Bengal. Brought up in a rural atmosphere, she was simple in her habits and had very little literary education. She was married at the age of six to Sri Ramakrishna who was then passing through a tremendous upheaval of spiritual advancement at Dakshineswar. But strangely enough he did not raise the least objection to his marriage and himself pointed out the bride who was marked out for him. Soon after marriage Sri Ramakrishna once again merged himself

in the bliss of God-consciousness. During the period of twelve years she met and served him only on two occasions. In the beginning of 1872, when she was a young woman of eighteen, the Holy Mother first visited Dakshineswar, accompanied by her father. Sri Ramakrishna cordially received her. Sri Ramakrishna said to her, 'I have learned to look upon every woman as my Mother. Do you want to drag me down into Maya? But I am at your service.' The noble wife replied, 'Why should I do that? I have come only to help you in the path of religious life.' The Holy Mother understood everything at a glance and completely surrendered herself to him, asking only to be taught by him. From that time onwards she lived faithfully by his side, always looking upon him as her Ishtam, as God incarnate, serving him to the best of her ability. The Master, in his turn, bestowed on her his personal attention and instructed her in spiritual and secular matters with great care and solicitude. It was during this period that Sri Ramakrishna formally worshipped the Holy Mother, thus completing the last act of his Sadhana. At Dakshineswar she lived a strenuous life, cheerfully undergoing great personal inconvenience and never uttering a word of murmur. She had to live in a small room, unobserved by the crowd of visitors who frequented the place. She used to get up very early in the morning and even while it was dark finish her ablutions, and then attend to her daily duties and engage herself in spiritual exercises. Excepting a few young disciples and the women devotees of Sri Ramakrishna she scarcely met any outsiders. This was her routine day after day, month after month, for several years.

After the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother lived sometimes in Calcutta and sometimes in Belur, going to her village home at intervals. The monastic disciples of Sri Ramakrishna had unbounded faith and devotion for the Holy Mother and it was the cherished desire of Swami Vivekananda that a permanent home for the Mother should be found. This plan could not be carried out till many years later when the

house in Baghbazar, Calcutta, which is so closely associated with the Holy Mother and where the present Udbodhan Office is situated, was procured. The Holy Mother lived here till her last days, initiating thousands of lay and monastic disciples, and continuing to be a source of great inspiration and guidance to many.

The book under review is a remarkable work. It is divided into two parts. The first part, entitled 'The Life of the Holy Mother,' contains an excellently written biographical account. Judged superficially the Holy Mother's life appears quite uneventful and ordinary. Tranquil and serene, simple and silent, she passed her whole life behind the arena of public gaze, in one long stillness of prayer and singleness of devotion to her husband and teacher, Sri Ramakrishna. Though possessed of artless simplicity and having no academical knowledge to boast of, yet she had the keen insight of a genius. As the wife of Sri Ramakrishna she had the highest opportunity of personal development in every walk of life. The conjugal life of the Holy Mother and Sri Ramakrishna is of an extraordinarily unique type, unprecedented in the history of the world, and forms an object-lesson to humanity. Once while massaging the feet of the Master, she suddenly asked him, 'What do you think of me?' He replied in a moment, 'Truly, I tell you that I find no difference between the person who is now serving me and the mother who gave me birth and the Goddess Kali who dwells in the temple.' What a perfect example of married love, so full of affection, so natural and easy, yet so very free from the least taint of passion! Even as a girl the Holy Mother was serene and self-composed, and while her companions indulged in amusements, she stayed apart and prayed to God to make her pure and stainless. Her motherly love was unequalled. She was the Mother to all, irrespective of caste or creed. She looked upon her devotees and disciples as her own flesh and blood. Full of tenderness and compassion, she was forgiveness and forbearance personified. The Holy Mother's particular attachment to one of her nieces, which proved a veritable obsession in her life, forms a most interesting episode, and in the chapter of the book dealing with the domestic life of the Mother, the subject is fully discussed, clearly bringing out the ethical significance of that relation and the spiritual purpose it had to serve in the fulfilment of her life's

mission. In her later life, we see her as the spiritual teacher and guide of thousands of admirers, devotees and disciples from all parts of the world. Moreover she had ever remained the fountain-head of inspiration and illumination to the dear and intimate monastic children of Sri Ramakrishna.

The second part of the book embodies the Holy Mother's conversations, being a lucid translation of the original Bengali volumes recording her talks with different persons at different times. These charming conversations contain many valuable spiritual instructions and give very touching and intimate glimpses into the human aspect of the Holy Mother's personality. Inset notes in bold types have been given to significant and important passages in the conversations to help the reader to pick them up easily. There are thirteen illustrations in all of which six are of the Mother taken at different times in her life. The Holy Mother's life is of great significance to Indian women who are to-day faced with a conflict of ideals. She was an ideal woman, a model housewife, an affectionate mother, a sweet relative, a devoted nun and a profound spiritual teacher—all in one. In short she was Sri Ramakrishna's last word on the ideal for Indian womanhood. Modesty, gentleness, patience, service, endurance, sacrifice, piety and fortitude—these are the notes that mingle to form the music of the Holy Mother's life. She was born to revive the wonderful Shakti in India, and making her the nucleus, once more will Gargis and Maitreys be born into this world. No one can study this life without being made fitter for life. The book is an invaluable companion to all the English-knowing devotees and admirers of Sri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother. It is nicely printed and handsomely got-up. We heartily welcome this much-needed publication and hasten to recommend it to the reading public.

BENGALI

SRI SRI LATU MAHARAJER SMRITI-KATHA. BY CHANDRASEKHAR CHATTOPADHYAYA. Available at the Udbodhan Office, 1, Udbodhan Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta. Pp. 528+16. Price Re. 1-5 As.

Swami Adhutananda or Latu Maharaj, as he was popularly called, was one of the chief monastic disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. Like every other disciple of the great Master he, too, was unique in his own way. He

lived a life purely spiritual in nature, and vindicated the fact that even without the least book-learning one can attain to the highest pinnacle of spiritual realizations. In his later life he used to give expression, in his characteristic homely way, to the highest truths that the Vedas and Upanishads proclaim. And all that knowledge he acquired not by any second-hand means but through his own experiences.

The author of the present volume, who had the rare privilege to sit for years at the feet of the Swami and know him at close quarters, has given a vivid picture of his wonderful life, completely dedicated to God. It is such lives that show us the way to God, and we believe that the book will get a ready acceptance in the hands of those who are endeavouring to live a spiritual life. The printing and get-up are quite nice.

YOGASADHANAR BHITTI. BY SRI AUROBINDO. TRANSLATED BY NALINIKANTO

GUPTA. *Published by the Culture Publishers, 25A, Bakul Bagan Row, Calcutta. Pp. 120. Price Re. 1-8 As.*

It is a translation from English of the book *Bases of Yoga*. It comprises of extracts from letters written at times by Sri Aurobindo to his disciples in reply to the queries they made. The book is full of practical hints as to how to live a life of Yoga and will remove many misconceptions about it that exist in the popular mind. The printing and get-up are satisfactory.

THAKURER NAMAMRITA. *Published by Swami Yogavilas, Sri Yogabinod Ashrama, Shimultala. Pp. 112. Distributed free.*

It is the tenth and enlarged edition of the book and contains 210 carefully selected religious songs including the *Ramanamam*. The book will be of much use to those who are interested in devotional music.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIDYAMANDIRA,

A New Type of Residential College at Belur Math

The Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, which has recently been affiliated to the Calcutta University up to the I.A. standard, opens on July 4, 1941. It comes into existence as part of a vast scheme of educational experiment. Swami Vivekananda dreamed of an institution where the shortcomings of the present system of education would be removed and the boys would be taught, trained and disciplined along lines which would make them loyal to the true interests of the nation and prepare them for the battle of life. The Vidyamandira is the humble beginning of this great experiment.

The Vidyamandira, which is a wholly residential college, is located amidst peaceful surroundings on an extensive plot of land lying between the Grand Trunk Road and the monastery at Belur. It is less than four miles from Howrah and is linked with Calcutta by a regular bus service. It has been granted affiliation in English, Bengali, Sanskrit, History, Logic, Mathematics, and Civics up to the I. A. standard for the

present. It is equipped with an exceptionally brilliant Staff, including some highly qualified monastic members of the Mission. The College, which is housed in a double-storeyed commodious building, will soon develop into a First Grade Institution.

The Vidyamandira being wholly residential in character, the *alumni* will get, in addition to all the advantages of modern university education, an opportunity to live in close touch with the resident teachers and enjoy the benefits of home life. They will be helped through religious and moral training to acquire a steady character and a healthy outlook on life. Special attention will be paid to their physical well-being as well, and there will be ample provision for outdoor games and indoor exercises under a trained teacher.

The Hostel is a three-storeyed building with the latest sanitary arrangements, electric lights, etc., and has accommodation for about sixty students at present. It will be

managed by the monastic members of the Staff. Total charges including board, lodging and tuition will be Rs. 25/-.

Admission begins just after the publication of the results of Matriculation Examination.

For Prospectus and Admission Forms, applications should be made with one anna stamp to the Principal, the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, P. O. Belur Math, Dist. Howrah.

ASANSOL

The birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated at the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Asansol, from the 18th to the 20th of April, 1941. The programme included Puja, Homa, Bhajan, procession, readings from the Bhagavata and feeding of the poor. Besides these, two largely attended public meetings were held under the presidentships of Rai Bahadur N. C. Ghose, Chief Operating Superintendent, E. I. Ry., and Mr. B. K. Guha, I.C.S., District Judge.

Burdwan, respectively. Srimat Swami Madhavananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, addressed both the meetings on the deep significance of the life and gospel of the Master. Swami Vasudevananda, Swami Japananda, Swami Jnanatmananda, Prof. Provash Chandra Ghose and S. J. Bhutnath Banerjee were the other speakers. Two lantern lectures, illustrating the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, were delivered by Swami Pranavatmananda.

KATIHAR

The Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Katihar, celebrated the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna on the 26th and 27th April, 1941. Usha Kirtan, Puja and feeding of more than 2,000 Daridra Narayans formed part of the celebration. The annual meeting of the Ashrama took place on the 27th with Srimat Swami Madhavananda in the chair.

The Secretary of the Ashrama read the annual report. Speeches on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna were delivered in English, Hindi and Urdu. The President spoke first in Hindi and then in Bengali. The Swamiji also addressed a ladies' meeting organized in this connection.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION, KARACHI

The report under review places before the public a short account of the activities of the Math and Mission during the year 1940. The Library of the Math was well utilized by the interested public. Classes on the Gita, Bhagavata and Upanishads were conducted thrice a week and a general religious class was held on every Sunday.

A total number of 52,817 cases were treated in the Homoeopathic Dispensary conducted by the Mission. Of these 10,111 were new cases. The school for Bhils, conducted at a village named Clifton, had 35 students on its roll, of whom 24 were boys and 11 girls. Spinning and soap-making

were taught to the students. Provisions were made to supply the students with one daily meal. In the same village a Night School was conducted to impart education to adults. Another Night School, mainly for the training of primary teachers, was conducted at Kumbharwada. The strength was 16.

Present Needs: (1) Rs. 5,000/- for maintaining the present activities—both medical relief and mass uplift. (2) Rs. 2,000/- for a building for the Bhil School. (3) Rs. 2,000/- for adding more vocational sections to the Bhil School. (4) Rs. 2,000/- for providing model huts to the Bhil villagers.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION CALCUTTA STUDENTS' HOME, DUM-DUM

The Students' Home is meant for poor and meritorious students going up for higher education in the college. It tries to supplement the merely academic education of the University by providing facilities to the inmates to develop their character and efficiency.

At the end of the year 1940, there were 46 students in the Home, of whom 25 were free, 9 part-free and 12 paying. 4 students appeared in the B. A. Examination and 1 in the B.Sc.; all of them passed, one with honours and one with distinction. All the 8 students who sat for the I.Sc. Examination

passed, one obtaining a Government scholarship. Four of the 5 students who appeared for the I.A. Examination passed; one of them obtained a Government scholarship. One student passed the first M. B. Examination.

Religious classes were held at regular intervals and a socio-religious class, in which students read extracts from books on various subjects, was held every week. A monthly manuscript magazine was conducted by the boys. A Library containing 1,475 well-chosen books helped the students to extend

their knowledge beyond the college curriculum. All household duties were managed by the students. Besides this, they had to cultivate a kitchen garden and a number of flower beds which made them learn the dignity of labour.

The Home urgently requires an additional monthly subscription of Rs. 100/- to meet its current expenses. An endowment of G. P. Notes of the face value of Rs. 4,000/-, that will go to maintain one free student at a time, may be made in the memory of any of the donor's departed relatives.

NEW YORK

The birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated at the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre of New York on March 2, 1941. There was a special devotional service in the chapel of the Centre in the morning. Swami Yatiswarananda and Swami Nikhilananda spoke on 'The Life and Teachings of the Great Master.' The altar was decorated with beautiful flowers brought by the devotees for this occasion. After the service, which was attended by about 100 people, Hindu sweets were served.

The same evening a dinner was held at Schrafft's, 220 West 57th Street, in further celebration of Sri Ramakrishna's birthday. In addition to the two Swamis, the speakers were Mr. Joseph Campbell of Sarah Lawrence College, Dr. Allan E. Claxton, pastor of the Broadway Temple Methodist Church, and Mr. Ralph S. Robbins, President of the Centre. After the speeches, Mr. Albert Kane and Dr. Richard Herbst showed some very interesting moving pictures of Indian life, including street scenes in towns and villages, views of Shantiniketan and Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, and the capturing of wild elephants in Mysore. Over seventy-five guests attended the dinner.

Both the service in the morning and the dinner in the evening were thoroughly enjoyed by all who took part in them. In

order to be present on this occasion, Swami Yatiswarananda, who has been at the Centre for the past year, delayed his departure for the west coast, where he plans to take up work in California for a time.

Swami Nikhilananda, leader of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre of New York, was the concluding speaker in a series of five lectures by representatives of several great religious denominations on 'Faith for To-day', held at the Town Hall in New York City. The Swami's lecture was on Friday morning, March 7th. Other speakers in the series were: Dr. Stanley High, representing Protestantism; Rev. J. G. Walsh, S. J., of Fordham University, representing Roman Catholicism; Dr. Frank Kingdon, Chairman, New York Chapter, Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies; and Dr. Louis Finkelstein, of the Jewish Theological Seminary, representing Judaism.

Swami Nikhilananda's lecture evoked much favourable comment, presenting as it did the broad and catholic views of Hinduism on the problems of God, the soul, and the universe, and the constructive suggestions that may be deduced from its teachings for 'Faith for To-day'. After the lecture numerous questions from the audience were answered by the Swami.

JAMSHEDPUR

The birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated by the Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Society, Jamshedpur, for six days from the 21st to 26th March, 1941. On the first day a public meeting under the presidentship of Mr. J. N. Das Gupta was held in the Kadma Farm area. Swami Gambhirananda, Mr. J. Chatterjee and Prof. S. N. Chakravarty addressed the

gathering. Swami Gambhirananda addressed a ladies' meeting organized on the second day. 'Sri Ramakrishna and the Motherhood of God' was the subject dwelt on. In the evening of the same day another public meeting was held in the Society premises with Mr. P. H. Kutar in the Chair. Dr. Mahendra Nath Sircar of the Calcutta University was the principal

speaker. The annual general meeting of the Society was held on the 23rd. Mr. W. H. Ames, Chief Engineer, the Tisco Ltd., presided. Swami Dhiratmananda, Secretary of the Society, read the annual report. Dr. Mahendra Nath Sircar, Swami

Gambhirananda and Swami Japananda addressed the meeting. Three other meetings were organized in different parts of the city in which the speakers addressed the audience on the various aspects of the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAM, BRINDAVAN

The different activities of the Sevashram during the year 1940 were as follows:—

(1) *Indoor General Hospital*: The Sevashram has 82 beds in all the wards. The total number of cases treated was 477 as against 289 of the previous year. Of these 419 were cured and discharged, 8 were relieved and discharged, 18 were discharged otherwise, 23 died, and 14 remained under treatment at the end of the year. The total number of surgical cases in the Indoor Hospital was 110.

(2) *Outdoor Dispensary*: The total number of new cases treated at the Outdoor Dispensary of the Sevashram was 15,984 as against 13,115 of the previous year, and the total number of repeated cases was 27,468. The total number of surgical cases was 402.

(3) *Outdoor Help*: Seventeen persons received monthly outdoor relief, and the total expenditure incurred was Rs. 67-0-9

in cash. Recipients were generally helpless men and women of respectable families. Cloths and blankets were also supplied to the needy.

The finances of the Sevashram are far from satisfactory. The total income from subscriptions, donations, and interests on endowments was Rs. 10,116-5-8, including Rs. 1,351-2-2, the balance of the previous year. The total expenditure under the various heads was Rs. 8,417-12-6 leaving a cash balance of Rs. 1,698-8-9. In the Headquarters account the total receipt was Rs. 24,832-5-5, including the balance of the previous year, and the expenditure was Rs. 24,656-14-0, leaving a balance of Rs. 175-7-5.

The immediate needs of the Sevashram are funds for building a Nursing Room and a wall fencing, a permanent kitchen, an Outdoor Dispensary building, a Guest House, an Embankment and a Landing Ghat, and a Permanent Fund for its maintenance.

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No. 8



“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

AT THE HOUSE OF ADHAR

Saturday, 6th December, 1884.

Rakhal has come. He went to Brindaban and has recently returned from there. Sri Ramakrishna spoke of him to Sarat and Devendra and asked them to make his acquaintance. So they have come with the earnest desire of meeting him.

Sarat and Sannyal are Brahmins by birth, while Adhar belongs to a lower caste. They leave the place in a hurry lest Adhar should invite them to stay for meals. They have begun to come only recently and do not know the intense love the Master cherishes for Adhar. The Master says that the devotees are a class by themselves. They all belong to one community.

With great care does Adhar treat Sri Ramakrishna and the devotees to a sumptuous feast. The devotees now proceed home; but as they go the sweet words of the Master ring in their ears and the picture of his wonderful love lingers in their mind.

Srijut Bankim invited Sri Ramakrishna to his house when he met the latter at the house of Adhar. So, a few days later, the Master sent Srijut Girish and M. to his house at Sanki-bhanga. They had a long talk with him on Sri Ramakrishna. Bankim expressed a desire to see Sri Ramakrishna again, but it did not materialize due to pressure of work.

Saturday, 27th December, 1884.

The Master sits with the devotees at the foot of the Panchavati (a cluster of five sacred trees) and listens to some portions of the *Devi Chaudhurani* read out to him. The book is written by Bankim. The Master then dwells at length on the doctrine of Nishkama Karma (work without attachment to results) as propounded in the Gita. Kedar, Ram, Nityagopal, Tarak (Swami Shivananda), Prasanna (Swami Trigunatita), Surendra, and many others are present.

WITH KESHAB AT DAKSHINESWAR

Saturday, 1st January, 1881.

The Māghotsava¹ of the Brahmo Samaj is approaching. Keshab Sen is coming to-day to pay a visit to Sri Ramakrishna at the temple at Dakshineswar. Trailokya, Jaigopal Sen, and many other Brahmo devotees are accompanying him. Ram, Manomohan, and a few other devotees are already there.

Some of the Brahmo devotees have arrived at the temple earlier than Keshab. They are sitting before Sri Ramakrishna. All are eagerly expecting Keshab and, with their eyes turned towards the south, are waiting for the time when he will come and land from the steamer. Some stir and confusion prevails in the room till the arrival of Keshab.

Keshab has come. He carries a pair of bael fruits and a flower-bouquet in his hands and placing them before Sri Ramakrishna bows down to him by touching his feet. The Master also returns the salute by touching the ground.

Sri Ramakrishna smiles in joy as he talks to Keshab.

Sri Ramakrishna (to Keshab, with a smile): 'Keshab, you may like me, but your disciples do not. So I was just telling them, Let us somehow while away our time till Govinda comes.

(To the disciples of Keshab) 'Look here, your Govinda has come! I was indulging in empty talks; and how can it attract your mind! (All laugh).

'It is not easy to obtain a vision of Govinda. Have you not seen in a dramatic performance that when Narada comes to Vraja and prays to the Lord with all the earnestness of his soul saying, "O Govinda, Thou art verily my life, the

sustaining power of my being," Sri Krishna makes His appearance with the cowherds and the milk-maids behind Him? God cannot be realized unless the heart yearns for Him.'

(To Keshab) 'Keshab, let us hear something from you. All are eager to listen to you.'

Keshab (humbly, with a smile): 'To speak to you! It will be as good as carrying coals to Newcastle!'

Sri Ramakrishna (smiling): 'No, you do not know. The nature of devotees is like that of hemp-smokers. We may smoke alternately and enjoy.' (All laugh).

It is 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The music of the concert at the temple is being heard.

Sri Ramakrishna (to Keshab and others): 'Just listen, what an exquisite music it is! One keeps on playing on a single note which forms the background, as it were, of a variety of melodies played by the other. I like it. Why should I play on a single note while there are seven reeds in the flute? Why should I cultivate exclusively the attitude of a man of knowledge and continue repeating, "I am He, I am He"? I like to play a variety of notes through the seven reeds. Why should I look upon Him as the formless Brahman alone? I shall adore, enjoy, and sport with Him in many different ways—as a quiet devotee, a father, mother, friend, and wife.'

In speechless wonder does Keshab listen to these words. Says he, 'I have never heard of such a wonderful synthesis of knowledge and devotion.'

Keshab (to Sri Ramakrishna): 'How long can you hide yourself like this? By and by people will come here in crowds!'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'Don't say like this. I live a simple life and spend my

¹ A yearly festival observed in winter.

THE RESUSCITATION OF THE KSHATRIYA SPIRIT.

It is related in the Mahabharata that Nahusha, an ancestor of the Pandavas, performed one hundred Ashwamedha sacrifices and attained the position of Indra in the Svargaloka. His pride of power brought on him a curse and he fell, much like Milton's Lucifer, taking the body of a huge python. Centuries rolled on. It so happened that the Pandavas in their wanderings came across this python, their ancestor, and were caught in his coils. The contact awakened Nahusha who put a few questions to the wise Yudhishtira, the eldest of the Pandavas, the king who stood firm in the battle-field, as his name signifies, and who was also the paragon of righteousness (Dharma) and truthfulness (Satya). 'Who is a Brahmin and what is the knowledge that is worth possessing?' asked Nahusha. Dharmaraja replied to the following effect. Birth and position in society do not make a Brahmin. In whomsoever truth, charity, forgiveness, compassion, love and austerity are found, he is a Brahmin, even though he is born of Shudra parents. In whomsoever the opposites of these qualities are found, he is a Shudra, even though he be of Brahmin parentage. That knowledge which is worth possessing is the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme Reality. After answering certain questions put to him by Dharmaraja, the ancestor is said to have departed to heaven proclaiming aloud: 'Truth, self-control, austerity, charity, non-injury to all beings, devotion to one's own duties in life—these alone are the means of salvation; neither family nor caste can bring one the highest good in life, O, king!'

The story from the ancient epic has given us an answer to the question: 'Who is a Brahmin?' Let us proceed to consider the allied question: 'Who is a Kshatriya?' The sacred books speak to us so much about the highest ideal and we become so infatuated with words that we do not pause to evaluate our own limited capacity and the necessity to choose a relatively lower ideal which we as individuals can hope to live by. On the other hand, we delude ourselves with the fond belief that an ideal which can be easily comprehended by the intellect can be as easily attained in life. The ethical teachings of the Bhagavad-Gita may be summed up in the statement: 'He who does the duty ordained by his own nature incurs no evil.' The very incident that led to the sacred revelation in the battle-field of Kurukshetra emphasizes the fact that a prince who is yet a prince should not lay aside the sword changing it for the beggar's bowl. The Gita urges the performance of one's own duty (Svadharmas) as determined by one's own nature (Svabhava). The concluding chapter of the Gita studies this question in the light of social psychology as expounded in the Sankhya philosophy. The Sankhya is pre-eminently the science of Gunas—the psychological tendencies which determine individual character. The balanced state of serene tranquillity of the mind which illumined by knowledge has risen above action and inaction is known as Sattva. The activity exhibited by the will-aspect of the mind which though illumined by knowledge has not wholly risen above passions and desires is known as Rajas. The inaction of the mind which is

steeped in ignorance and has not risen above passions and desires is known as **Tamas**. Let us quote a few Shlokas from the eighteenth chapter of the Gita. 'Knowledge, action, and agent are declared in the Sankhya philosophy to be of three kinds only, from the distinction of the Gunas; hear them also duly' (19). 'That by which the one indestructible substance is seen in all beings, inseparate (undifferentiated) in the separated, know that knowledge to be **Sattvika**' (20). 'But that knowledge which sees in all beings various entities of different kinds as different from one another, know thou that knowledge as **Rajasika**' (21). 'Whilst that which is confined to one single effect as if it were the whole, without reason, without foundation in truth and trivial, that is declared to be **Tamasika**' (22). 'An ordained action done without love or hatred by one not desirous of the fruit and free from attachment, is declared to be **Sattvika**' (23). 'But the action which is performed desiring desires, or with self-conceit and with much effort, is declared to be **Rajasika**' (24). 'That action is declared to be **Tamasika** which is undertaken through delusion, without heed to the consequence, loss (of power and wealth), injury (to others) and (one's own) ability' (25). 'An agent who is free from attachment, non-egotistic, endued with fortitude and enthusiasm, and unaffected in success or failure, is called **Sattvika**' (26). 'He who is passionate, desirous of the fruits of action, greedy, malignant, impure, easily elated or dejected, such an agent is called **Rajasika**' (27). 'Unsteady, vulgar, arrogant, dishonest, malicious, indolent, desponding, and procrastinating, such an agent is called **Tamasika**' (28). 'Of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas, as also of Shudras, O scorcher of foes, the duties are distributed

according to the Gunas born of their own nature' (41). 'The control of the mind and the senses, austerity, purity, forbearance, and also uprightness, knowledge, realization, belief in a hereafter,—these are the duties of the Brahmins, born of (their own) nature' (42). 'Prowess, boldness, fortitude, dexterity, and also not flying from battle, generosity, and sovereignty are the duties of Kshatriyas, born of (their own) nature' (43). 'Agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade are the duties of the Vaishyas, born of (their own) nature; and action consisting of service is the duty of the Shudras, born of (their own) nature' (44). The power which these three natures exhibit may be conveniently spoken of as soul-force, will-force, and physical force. The three Gunas may be distributed among the four Varnas in some such way: pure Sattva for the Brahmins, Sattvika-Rajas for the Kshatriya, Rajasika-Tamas for the Vaishya, and Tamas for the Shudra.

The sage who attains the knowledge of the Supreme Reality may be said to be **Gunatita**, one who has transcended the three Gunas. The particular caste to which a person belongs does not always determine his Svadharma as we have seen from the reply which Dharmaraja gave to Nahusha. The Svabhava determines the Svadharma. The sages belong to a class by themselves. Soul-force can be developed by those who are Brahmins by nature, will-force by those who are Kshatriyas by nature, and mere physical force by others. As every average citizen possesses all the three Gunas in varying degrees, it is open to all such to develop all the three forms of power as far as their capacities permit. Education rightly understood is the train-

ing of the whole man so as to enable him to manifest the power within. Brahmins as teachers of all arts and sciences are known to have engaged themselves in training young Kshatriya princes in the art of warfare. As the higher includes the lower, we find Brahmins participating in the Mahabharata war. We also find kings such as Janaka becoming the teachers of Brahma-Jnana to Brahmins. That phase of the science of Yoga known as Raja-Yoga appears to provide *par excellence* the necessary training for one who is destined to enter into kingly duties and become a leader of men.

As we have already stated above the sacred books often place before us the highest ideal; they also speak disparagingly of lower ideals in order to help us to visualize the highest in bolder relief.

Nevertheless when we look upon human society as a whole we recognize the diversity of human tendencies and capacities and the necessity for different paths to suit different individuals. The crystallized system of castes that has come down to us through the ages may continue to guide Hindu society, if the leaders would admit the fact that all castes can produce exceptional individuals who rise above the conventional limitations set to the particular castes in which they were born. The Svabhava of an individual is a better criterion for determining his Svadharma. Mental attitudes and capacities may differentiate individuals more than accidents of birth and shades of colour in the complexion. The person who has no will of his own and lacking in intellectual capacity and initiative, always looks up to someone else for guidance even in the smaller concerns of life is indeed a Shudra, whatever be the label attached to him by virtue of his parentage. As

there is absolutely no need and no sanction of the Shastras to recognize a permanent fifth caste or the innumerable sub-castes which Hindu society has developed in its period of decadence, it is open to any Hindu to claim the religious rites and privileges ascribed to the fourth caste and to perform the duties pertaining to it. The story of the butcher-sage (Dharma-Vyadha) related in the Mahabharata testifies to the fact that perfection can be attained by a person while continuing to perform his Svadharma. The person who possesses initiative and intelligence and not being free from the love of gain engages himself in trade, submitting his will to the guild or union to which he belongs and at the same time contributing to its deliberations is indeed a Vaishya, whatever be the label attached to him by virtue of his parentage. The overwhelming majority of the people belong to these two classes. Persons who have disciplined their body and mind by long and arduous training, and have risen above the desire for individual gain by having identified their interests with those of the nation and country to which they belong and also cheerfully face death to uphold the honour of the nation and the country are indeed Kshatriyas, whatever be the label attached to them by virtue of their parentage. In the Shudra the affective (feeling) aspect of the mind rules the other two, in the Vaishya the cognitive (intellect) aspect of the mind rules the other two, and in the Kshatriya the conative (will) aspect of the mind rules the other two. The Kshatriya is thus the man who has developed a sovereign will, the man of action *par excellence*. He has subdued his lower passions and desires, yet he is actuated by love of country and a passion for fame and glory. He in whom this last infirmity of noble minds gets erased, he

whose mind and senses are fully controlled, and he who practises the ideal of Ahimsa and finds his wealth in non-possession and austerities and his highest treasure in the love of wisdom is indeed a Brahmin, whatever be the label attached to him by virtue of his parentage.

* * *

Now we come to an important practical question. Which of these four ideals of life should be placed before the young men and women who seek entrance into our colleges and universities for higher education and training? The very fact that they are qualified to seek higher learning rules out the lowest ideal. Now the question is, which of the other three should be placed before them? Youth possesses idealism and love of country and it is also in the nature of youth to give a high value to honour and glory. Again, it should be admitted that youth is not mature enough to understand the higher morality of non-resistance preached by great prophets and founders of religions. All these make it evident that the Kshatriya ideal is the one most suitable for youth. Those who cannot reach it will naturally sink down to the Vaishya ideal. On the other hand they that have gone through the discipline of body and mind necessary for the Kshatriya and to whom complete self-control, non-resistance, love to all beings, and an outlook that transcends the limitations of nation and country become practicable will as naturally rise up to the highest ideal of Brahmins. In any country the persons who can take up the Kshatriya ideal are necessarily few but at the same time we should admit that those who can rise up to the Brahminic ideal are fewer. Hence it follows that the comparatively lower Kshatriya ideal is bound to have a

wider appeal than the highest ideal which demands complete self-control and almost complete self-effacement of the individual. Again, the path to the attainment of Sattva lies through Rajas. From inaction one has to proceed to action and then to the serenity that transcends both action and inaction. 'Inactivity should be avoided by all means. Activity always means resistance. Resist all evils, mental and physical; and when you have succeeded in resisting, then will calmness come. It is very easy to say, "Hate nobody, resist not evil," but we know what that kind generally means in practice. When the eyes of society are turned towards us we make a show of non-resistance, but in our hearts it is canker all the time. We feel the utter want of the calm of non-resistance; we feel that it would be better for us to resist These ideas of serenity and renunciation have been preached for thousands of years; everybody has heard of them from childhood, and yet we see very few in the world who have really reached that state. I do not know if I have seen twenty persons in my life who are really calm and non-resisting and I have travelled over half the world. Every man should take up his own ideal and endeavour to accomplish it; that is a surer way of progress than taking up other men's ideals, which he can never hope to accomplish' (Swami Vivekananda: *Karma-Yoga*).

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Energy, love of independence, spirit of self-reliance, immovable fortitude, dexterity in action, unity of purpose, thirst for improvement, alertness, generosity, manly prowess, fearlessness in facing the struggle, and such other noble virtues combined with a trained mind that can face all problems and give prompt decisions go to the making of

the Kshatriya ideal. *Plutarch's Lives* depicting the Godlike qualities of Greek and Roman heroes has the reputation of being the one book that has exerted the greatest influence on many men of action of subsequent ages in Europe. The great biographer touches the very springs of human action which are the same for the East and the West and consequently the *Lives* has its appeal to the youth of all countries. Moral virtues are realized in action and the lives of heroes have the potentiality of inspiring men to noble deeds. Dexterity in action is not attained by mere repetition. The will to do should be guided by a clear intellect that does not miss a single relevant detail. The training necessary for leadership—for on a closer analysis, the Kshatriya ideal comes to that—should necessarily be many-sided. At the same time economy of effort is necessary and no time should be wasted on trivial accomplishments, however ornamental they might appear to be. The ancient treatises on Artha-Shastra lay down the broad outlines of the courses of studies and training necessary for the complete education of the prince, the leader of men. They should certainly be supplemented by the ripe wisdom of other nations in the East and in the West.

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Lycurgus, the law-giver of Ancient Sparta, elaborated a course of discipline that produced excellent fighting material. The Lacedaemonians (Spartans) perpetually lived in military camps, the men by themselves and the women separately by themselves and the training began at a very early age. Children who were found physically unfit were thrown away. Fearless and valiant as they were the Spartans made good soldiers. They could never become an imperial race for by their very training the Spartans were unfit to govern free-

men. The British have developed traditions of leadership and organization in their great public schools and these served them well in building up a great empire. But traditions often become obstructing forces and dead weights of the past when they refuse to yield to the demands of a changing world. No nation can afford to stand still hoping to solve its problems in the light of its own past. The policy that was successful in the past may not be successful in the future. Coming nearer home, for us in India our glorious past has many lessons to teach but it is good for us to remember that we have to learn most of our lessons from the contemporary world. Our centres of learning should not be content with their curricula of studies, which were formulated seven or eight decades ago with the purpose of producing efficient clerks. The scope should become much more liberalized. British universities are on the whole far behind continental and American universities and we who draw our inspiration from the former lag very much behind in those branches of studies which would help in forming the minds of our future leaders. The present tendency to give increased attention to the physical sciences and technology is the response to a definite demand in that direction. The demand for trained leaders who could thoroughly grasp contemporary world movements and devise practical ways and means for helping the people of this great country to take their rightful place in the comity of nations is also an urgent one.

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The love of freedom which is now surging in the hearts of the Indian masses should be made more dynamic. The free man is the disciplined man. He cannot afford to be slack either in his person or in his clothes or in his

habitation. These have to be tied up. He should learn to rise above circumstances and also to combine with his fellow citizens to struggle unto death if necessary, against petty tyrannies that attempt to curb his manhood. In times of strife he should 'stand firm' and obeying the words of the leader help in warding off the common danger. The personal message of Mr. Churchill to the British people outlining their 'order and duty' in the event of an invasion shows to what extent discipline ordinarily associated with military training is also necessary for civilians and non-combatants. Minus the skill in arms the ordinary citizen should have the same training as the soldier. Cowardly flight at the approach of danger is the mark of the slave. The freeman stands firm and yields not. Goondas and other unruly elements fall back and lose all power of action when they come face to face with a disciplined man of true moral worth. Have we not seen men mastering wild animals by a mere look or a word of command? The power of a strong will can conquer wild and unruly men even as it can conquer wild animals. It is open to all to develop this Kshatriya power. Let us not confuse this with the 'Soul-force' associated with saints and seers who stand far above the common level of humanity. Terms such as 'Ahimsa' and 'Soul-force' have become common currency in connection with the political movement in this country. Let us bear in mind that these are ideals to be realized by men of the highest order, men who have freed themselves from all passions and prejudices and all ideas of gain and loss by years of severe austerities and arduous discipline. The discipline for the development of a strong will and the true Kshatriya spirit should precede the higher discipline necessary for

the realization of the Brahminic ideal of Ahimsa and Soul-force. The man who has not shed all fears has no right to follow the path of Ahimsa which demands of him a courage greater than that of the Kshatriya.

* * *

The Samurai are the Kshatriyas of Japan. They are followers of Zen Buddhism, the main teaching of which is the defiance of death. Zen is a religion of will-power and will-power is what is needed by warriors. Zen philosophy does not engage itself in ratiocinations but seeks to arrive at truth by direct intuition. Our Upanishadic philosophy which originally had its highest exponents among members of the ruling class aimed also at apprehending truth by direct intuition. It fell on its evil days when various schools of philosophers caught hold of it and began writing elaborate commentaries. When the Upanishads and the Gita say, 'He who takes the Self to be the slayer, he who takes It to be the slain neither of these knows,' they are not talking metaphysics. They place before the disciple a way of life, which he has to follow. The scene lies in the battle-field. The command of the Divine Teacher is scarcely veiled. The disciple is asked to have faith in the Indweller and engage in action. When the will abdicating its sovereignty yields place to weak commiseration and vain forebodings, the individual loses faith and becomes a coward. Overculture of the intellect often leads to effeminacy. In times of crisis when the mind is clouded the saving force is the word of command from the leader. Arjuna's appeal to the Divine Teacher is, 'Say decidedly what is good for me.' The virile spirit that sets aside conventions and forms and goes direct into the heart of the question secures men's allegiance much more effectively than

the weak and vacillating spirit that has no settled convictions of its own.

* * *

Self-control is achieved by discipline. When body and mind are thoroughly disciplined the human will comes to its own. A clumsy body that does not promptly respond to the command from within becomes a drag upon the mind. The ancient Yoga system lays down the performing of Asanas to acquire bodily control. The methods adopted by the drill-sergeant are also necessary. Bodily discipline although valuable in itself is not everything. The mind should be disciplined to get rid of fears and phobias. The philosophy of life that would establish the sovereignty of the will should be such as would free the mind from the trammels of the flesh. Stoicism in the West and asceticism in the East arose to cultivate the self-denial necessary to make men face danger cheerfully. This is just the discipline necessary for the Kshatriya and the true soldier. In course of time Stoicism and asceticism were carried to excess as ends in themselves and thereby lost their true significance. The virtues we enumerated above as forming the Kshatriya ideal have all to be cultivated in everyday life. Constant meditation on the ideal means that the standard set up by the ideal should serve as a sort of spiritual measuring-rod for all actions performed. The man who is bent upon self-improvement has certainly time for healthy recreation but he hasn't a single moment to be wasted in vain pursuits.

* * *

In medieval Europe the institution of chivalry served as the means for the development of the Kshatriya spirit. Purity in thought, word, and deed, unflinching courage, honour, readiness to succour the helpless, and such other

virtues marked the true knight. We have placed purity first, for that is the source from which all virtues spring. Sir Galahad, the true knight says—

My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.

We know that he observed strict celibacy, for furtheron he says—

I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine.

In 'Lancelot and Elaine' Tennyson also paints for us the false knight who was not true to his vows.

The lady was, of course, the constant source of inspiration for the knight who was ready to give his life to save her from 'shame and thrall.' Here in India also brave Rajput matrons and maidens gave the inspiration to Rajput chivalry. When we consider the question in its various aspects, we find striking resemblance in the institutions of the East and the West.

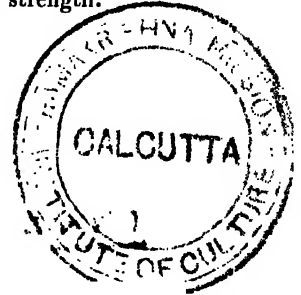
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What we are pleading for is not the resuscitation of the form of medieval chivalry but the spirit behind it. If we worship the mere form we are apt to become unbalanced like the hero of Cervantes. Aristocracy of birth belongs to medieval ages. But there is another aristocracy that is esteemed universally and at all times, that is the aristocracy of character. The development of this will bring about the resuscitation of the true Kshatriya spirit. We shall conclude by quoting a passage from the great dramatist, Henrik Ibsen. 'Mere democracy cannot solve the social question. An element of aristocracy must be introduced into our life. Of course I do not mean the aristocracy of birth or of the purse, or even the aristocracy of intellect. I mean the aristocracy of character, of will, of mind. That only can free us.

From two groups will this aristocracy I hope for come to our people—from our women and our workmen. The revolution in the social condition, now preparing in Europe, is chiefly concerned with the future of the workers and the women.

In this I place all my hopes and expectations; for this I will work all my life and with all my strength.'

Mayavati,
16 June 1941.



HENRI BERGSON

By R. M. LOOMBA

[Mr. Loomba, lecturer in philosophy, Ramjas College, University of Delhi, and author of a learned work on *Bradley and Bergson* gives in this article an account of the life and thought of the great philosopher, who recently passed away from the scene of earthly activities.—Ed.]

✓Bergson has been perhaps the greatest, the most widely read and the most widely translated philosopher of the age.

He was born in Paris, in 1859. Some years of his childhood were spent in England, after which his family settled down in France. He was thus a naturalized citizen of the French Republic. Towards the end of his life, however, political upheavels in Europe drove him back to England. For he had Jewish blood in him, as much as he had of the Irish.

He showed signs of extraordinary brilliance even in early life. During the middle teens, while still at school, he had won a prize for his scientific work. At the age of eighteen, again, he won a prize for a solution of a mathematical problem which obtained the distinction of being published in the *Annales de Mathématiques*.

For a time, indeed, Bergson had hesitated in the choice of his career, between the 'sciences' and the 'humanities.' But then he decided in favour of the latter, and entered the famous *Ecole Normale Supérieure* (Higher Normal School) in his own town, Paris. Here, at nineteen, he took the degree of *Agrégé de Philosophie*. Eight years later, he was admitted to the degree of

Docteur-ès-Lettres (Doctor of Letters) by the University of Paris, on a work on time and free will and a short Latin thesis on Aristotle.

Immediately on taking the *Agrégé de Philosophie*, he had received a teaching appointment at the *Lycée* in Angers. Two years later he was at the *Lycée Blaise-Pascal* in Clermont-Ferrand. After the *Docteur-ès-Lettres*, however, he again settled down in Paris, teaching for some months at the municipal *Collège Rollin* and for eight years at the *Lycée Henri-Quatre*. When he was thirty-nine, his Alma Mater, *L'Ecole Normale Supérieure*, received him as *Maître de Conférences* and later promoted him to a professorship. At the close of the century, when forty-one, he was installed in the Chair of Greek Philosophy at the famous *Collège de France*, an institution independent of the University of Paris and directly controlled by the French Ministry of Public Instruction. Bergson was given the largest lecture room in the College, and even this room, it is reported, became inadequate to accommodate all who gathered to hear him. In 1904, he succeeded the eminent sociologist Tarde in the Chair of Modern Philosophy at the College. In 1918, he succeeded Emile Ollivier at the *Académie Française*.

From that time he gave up teaching and devoted himself to writing, politics, and international affairs. He led a mission from France to America, and after the last Great War was President of the International Committee for Intellectual Co-operation appointed by the League of Nations.

Bergson's career as an original thinker began with the publication, mentioned above, of the solution to a mathematical problem in the *Annales des Mathématiques*. The five major works, however, in which he developed his epoch-making philosophy appeared when he was thirty, thirty-seven, forty-four, forty-eight, and seventy-three. They have all been translated into the English language, and bear respectively the titles, *Time and Free Will*, *Matter and Memory*, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, *Creative Evolution*, and *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*. Among his other important writings, two occupy an outstanding place, those on *Laughter* and on *Philosophical Intuition*.

Bergson played an active part at the first few International Congresses of Philosophy. At the first, in 1900 at Paris, he read a short but important paper on 'The Psychological Origin of Our Belief in the Law of Causality.' At the second, in 1904 at Geneva, he lectured on 'Psycho-physiological Parallelism.' The third at Heidelberg he could not attend due to illness. But he was back again at the fourth, in 1911 at Bologna, and delivered his address on 'Philosophical Intuition.'

His work brought Bergson many honours besides the Chairs at the *Collège de France* and the Presidentship of the International Committee for Intellectual Co-operation. At forty-two, in 1901, he was elected to the *Académie des Sciences morales et politiques* (Academy of Moral and Political Sciences). The great exponent of pragmatist philosophy,

William James of America, seventeen years Bergson's senior, called to his work the attention of the Anglo-American public and paid the most noteworthy tribute to him in his Hibbert Lectures delivered in 1908 at Oxford on 'A Pluralistic Universe.' The University of Oxford honoured Bergson in 1911 with its degree of Doctor of Science and the Cambridge University in 1920 with its degree of Doctor of Letters. He was invited to deliver the Huxley Lecture of 1911 at the Birmingham University. In 1913, he responded, by going over to the United States of America, to an invitation of the Columbia University in New York, and lectured on 'Spirituality and Liberty' and on 'The Method of Intuition.' The same year, he accepted the Presidentship of the British Society for Psychical Research. In 1914, he was elected a member of the *Académie Française* and President of the *Académie des Sciences morales et politiques*. He was also made *Officier de la Légion d'Honneur* and *Officier de L'Instruction publique*. The Scottish Universities invited him to deliver two courses of the famous Gifford Lectures in 1911, of which, however, one on 'The Problem of Personality' was delivered at Edinburgh University in spring of the year while the other, scheduled for autumn, had to be abandoned on the outbreak of the War. The Minister for Public Instruction in France invited him to write a book on French philosophy. In 1918, he was officially received by the *Académie Française*, was given a place among their 'Select Forty' and a session was held in his honour. In 1928, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature for the year 1927.

Bergson's personal life was a quiet and uneventful one of a scholarly professor, a life of a unitary, continuous 'interiority.' Events in the external world seem hardly to have ever greatly

shaken him. An early intellectual training in classical studies had moulded him into a reflective person, unmistakably honest but veiled and solitary, detached and withdrawn from the external world and turned within, into essentially a contemplative. Yet, he was not distant, but had in him a smiling and graceful gravity, an obliging courtesy, an unforced simplicity, and an unaffected modesty. Fed by intellectual superiority, natural reserve, and good education, he had developed a striking personality. With delicate features, a lofty forehead and bright eyes shining beneath bushy eyebrows, he would utter statements unhurried, dignified, measured, extraordinarily confident, and surprisingly clear. The intonations of his speech were musical and cajoling and he had a highly refined manner of taking breath. All these qualities distinguished and singled him out from the free and easy common run of mankind. He loved peaceful seclusion and silence so favourable to meditation, and was little seen in public, in society or in the cafés. His time was spent in the world of books.

✓He was extremely daring and original in his thought. He sought the truth and insisted on clearness and precision. To this end, he saw things in detail rather than in a broad vague manner, subjecting the questions before him patiently to a thorough reflective analysis with a view to hit upon the best means of solution.

✕It was particularly his mission to crusade against set cut and dried linguistic forms which, obstructing the way of free and spontaneous thought, instil into us and make us slaves to ready-made, fixed, and static ideas. It was his opinion that philosophy must speak a language which would be profound and yet be understood by all. With a remarkable combination of the geometric spirit and subtlety of penetration, he would see

into and follow the articulations of reality, its internal as well as external contours. He would, as it were, sink a plummet into reality. He denounced intellectualism in all its forms, particularly the logical and the scientific tendencies in philosophy, and stood for an intuitive as opposed to the traditional analytic method of Western philosophy. Analytic knowledge, he said, always moves round its object, is based necessarily upon points of view which must all be relative, and expresses itself through symbols. Intuition, on the other hand, would, by an effort of sympathetic imagination, enter into and identify itself with the absolute nature of the object. Bergson, therefore, calls upon philosophy to break with scientific habits, to dispense with all symbols, and to rid itself of all but the Reality we may be able to seize from within by intuition. ✕For a time, before he had developed this new intuitionistic technique for philosophy, Bergson was a mechanist, indifferent and even contemptuous towards metaphysics. He was almost a materialist. Spiritualism then seemed to him arbitrary. But his meditative reflections soon brought him into contact with 'something simple, infinitely simple, so extraordinarily simple that the philosopher has never succeeded in uttering it'—a reality that resisted a mechanistic explanation. This set him to examine the foundations of Spencerian evolutionism, the latest form of the mechanistic philosophy. And he found that it was rooted in a false distorted notion of time. It was a concept of time as abstract, infinitely divisible, homogeneous, measurable, calculable, and essentially quantitative. Thus conceived, time consisted of an infinite number of mutually external moments put together and spread out side by side in succession, moments marked by their ends rather than by the intervals of flow between these ends, and

unaffected by the order in which they occurred. It is a notion of time not as it is, but formed to suit a mould derived from a foreign source, from our perception of space. Real time, on the other hand, the time that is the stuff of reality, is essentially unmeasurable, non-homogeneous, concrete, qualitative, unforeseeable, ever-creative and irreversible. It consists in continuous change between interpenetrating moments, a change that is a progress, 'a continuous progress of the past which gnaws into the future and which swells as it advances.' Bergson called it Duration. It is particularly manifest in psychic life, where 'the truth is that we change without ceasing, and that the state itself is nothing but change.' Memory and character are its most outstanding fruits. Duration also appears in organized matter, in living bodies, though in a far lesser degree, in the unceasing continuity of growth, aging, and reproduction. Even unorganized, dead matter endures, it has a history consisting in invention and creation of forms. Its duration is, however, difficult to apprehend unless it is looked at as re-integrated into the story of the universe as a whole.

Viewed through an intuitive act of the mind, Bergson held, the whole universe of reality is a unity in multiplicity, an identity in difference. Its infinity no longer appears as infinite divisibility but as an analytic external and relative view of what is intuitively realized from within as something essentially simple and lending itself to an indivisible apprehension. It is a spontaneous expression in manifold directions of an ever-creative explosive spiritual life-force of enormous strength. He called it the *Elan Vital*. It is not an unchangeable being that by an act of volition decides to change and be many. Activity, change, creativity

are fundamental to its nature. The various directions of biological evolution, whether along its highways like those of vegetation, arthropods and vertebrates, or along its minor blind alleys, are all part of the huge creative evolution of this tremendous life-force and not what finalism or mechanism interprets them to be. The *Elan Vital* runs through all of them in a continuous flow of duration, illuminating the whole with a touch of art and awakening it with a sense of life and beauty. It proceeds 'like a shell, which suddenly bursts into fragments, which fragments, being themselves shells, burst in their turn into fragments destined to burst again, and so on for a time incommensurably long.'

But the life-force bears within itself an unstable balance of tendencies. As a result, the forward march of its creative evolution encounters resistance from one quarter—from its own by-product, inert matter. This resistance it tries to overcome by dint of humility, by first making itself very small and insinuating and subjecting itself to the mechanical aptitude of bodily conditions and then pushing the organism forward to evolve continuity in movement and liberty and unforeseeability in action. To this end it evolves the intellect. But then it is caught in a snare. Poised upon a whirlwind it is carried away by its own mechanical devices. It loses sight of its lofty aim and a tendency at self-preservation characterizes it into an automatism. The result is an intellect that can only deal with a static world subject to mechanical laws by constructing and using artificial, unorganized tools, specially tools to make such tools, that proceeds by knowledge of the form rather than the matter of reality, that moves within the realm of symbols and relative points of view,

that bears essentially on relations and in employing them divides more than unites, and that, consequently, is characterized by a natural incapacity to comprehend life.

Yet intelligence is still, according to Bergson, a pulse of the vital flow. It is, as it were, a solid nucleus formed by condensation or local concentration out of a fluid of which there remains an indistinct fringe surrounding it. It may, therefore, by a sudden tremendous effort, get dissolved again into the whole and thus live back its own genesis. 'And such a consciousness, turning around suddenly against the push of life which it feels behind, would have a vision of life complete—would it not?—even though the vision were fleeting.'

For this, intelligence must reintegrate and amalgamate itself with other forms of consciousness which life has evolved, the principal one among them being instinct. Instinct, by virtue of its spontaneity, expresses something imminent and essential in the evolutionary movement. It is moulded on the very form of life and furthers life's work of organizing matter. It discerns its force from within, by an intuition lived through, by a divining sympathy. Out of its amalgamation with intelligence would arise a spontaneous intuitive consciousness 'as wide as life,' disinterested, self-conscious, capable of reflecting upon its object and of enlarging it indefinitely.

Bergson has thus offered us a philosophical mysticism, which, as I have shown elsewhere,¹ is essentially idealistic. He belonged to a stage in the evolution of idealism which is characterized by a revolt against naturalism and intellectualism. Such an idealism must

inevitably culminate in a mystical trend, of which Bergson has been the boldest and most thorough-going exponent.

His philosophy has not confined itself to the realm of metaphysics but has extended its revolutionary outlook to various special fields also. Thus, in the field of ethics, he has denounced the determination of moral obligation by a closed society as opposed to the cultivation of a free and spontaneously acting 'open' mind. In religious thought, likewise, he represents a soaring back from various defensive reactions of society as well as from determinism towards a rediscovery of God and of the pure mystic spirit full of love in a tangible and visible form. The futurist programme in aesthetics too is directly traceable to Bergson's philosophy. He gave artists a message that would exalt individual intuition and inspire them to reproduce on their canvas 'no longer a fixed moment in universal dynamism, but the dynamic sensation itself.' He would lead musicians into a fluid realm of pure qualities imperceptibly shading off into one another. In literature he inspired the creation of a new type of novel, particularly by Marcel Proust. In politics, his doctrine of the *Elan Vital* has led to a revolutionary syndicalism that would restore a purified social life by insisting that social change in any class of people can be achieved only by the force of their own spontaneous direct action organized by their own associations through means that will evolve so as to suit their particular needs. In the theory of science, he has inspired a new positivism that criticizes scientific data in a vigorous and original way and shows how much arbitrariness there is in our methods of the measurement of magnitudes.

Bergson was a genius, richly creative,

¹ In my *Bradley and Bergson* (Lucknow: The Upper India Publishing House Ltd.).

highly original, and extraordinarily bold. And the secret of his life lay, in his own words, in 'concentrated thought with pure emotion at its base.'

INDIA'S EPOCHS IN WORLD-CULTURE

BY PROFESSOR DR. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR

(Continued from the previous issue)

WHAT IS AHIMSA ?

Now let us analyse the word Ahimsa. That word has become very common nowadays. Unless you and I use the word in season and out of season you and I cannot digest our food. But what could this Sanskrit word have meant? You and I are taught to believe by philosophers, historians, and politicians also that Ahimsa is the special gift of mother India, the characteristic and exclusive contribution of India, to world-culture. I should, therefore, like to know exactly in which period our mother India coined that word. Exactly what did mother India mean by this category, Ahimsa, in that period? There must be many philosophers here including the professors of languages, Pali, Sanskrit and Prakrit. I do not mean only the men who lecture at colleges but journalists also some of whom are the most creative men in modern India, as well as businessmen and lawyers including our Chairman, the Vice-Chancellor. I ask everybody to institute researches because I am very eager to inquire into the doctrine of Ahimsa. You must ransack three orders of texts, the Buddhist Pali texts, the Jain Prakrit texts, and finally the Sanskrit Buddhist and Hindu texts. We should have to ascertain, first, how many times that word has been used by our forefathers and, secondly, how many times it was employed to mean the kind of Ahimsa that is being

propagated nowadays by our Indian scholars, leaders, and philosophers as the special cult of India.

My researches into this subject—and without mock modesty I say that they are not very intensive—lead me to the conclusion, a very simple proposition, that every child understands. In ancient and medieval India the word Ahimsa signified—'Do not be jealous, Do not be envious, Do not be malicious, etc.' To me, a plain blunt man, Ahimsa means simply absence of jealousy, envy, malice or hatred. This is not a very dangerous proposition after all. This is a copy-book maxim of morality discovered by every race and in every region. If this is to be paraded as the great contribution of my mother India, I would be challenged by the representatives of all races because this can be proven to be their contribution also. And if my mother India cannot make any better show I should feel sorry for the poverty of her creativities. In any case I am sure that by emphasizing this notion our leaders are serving to make India the laughing-stock of all nations.

Another interpretation which I can discover, not according to my imagination but from the texts, is as follows. Himsa=killing. Ahimsa=non-killing, don't kill. Indians were taught not to kill. Yes. But, not to kill what?—this lamp post? or that tree over there? The Chairman interjects: Bugs! Our

Chairman is the Vice-Chancellor of the University. He is a man responsible for researches. He is the proper person to guide us. I am happy, therefore, to be anticipated by him. The interpretation that is most common in Buddhistic literature and Jaina Prakrit literature is—'do not kill animals.' But we, orthodox Hindus, know that many of us are used to animal sacrifices. I do not know what your Kali does among the Marathas and Hindus—thanis, but my Kali *Kalkattarcali* eats goats. To me, therefore, animal sacrifice is perfectly legitimate. But I can take it that 'do not kill an animal' was and continues to be a moral precept among the Buddhists, Jainas and to a certain extent also among sections of Hindus, e.g. Vaishnavas. Animal sacrifice is likely to appear cruel in certain eyes. And therefore I can believe that non-killing of animals is treated as an injunction of pity and mercy by some classes. All the same, we must not make too much of it as a doctrine or a philosophy. It is just a commonplace dictum of kindness. On this basis you can establish a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals. Non-killing of animals is a very simple proposition, not an unreasonable proposition, and can be readily understood.

What did the benevolent and merciful Asoka do in this regard? Asoka issued a firman to forbid the killing of animals. So far so good. Whether that firman was an act of positive law I should like to ask our learned Chairman to establish. I am not perfectly clear about that. To what extent were the edicts of Asoka regarded as the civil and criminal codes of India? I should like this topic to be taken up by students of historical jurisprudence. For the present, I believe that to a certain extent Asoka's *Hitopadesha* was a sort of morality, perhaps positive morality, but

whether it was positive law is not always beyond doubt, indeed, very often questionable.

Be this as it may, what did our Asoka say? He said something like the following: 'Do not kill animals, and I am happy that in my regime during the last so many years, as a result of my propaganda—he is so conscious of the results of his propaganda—people have been observing Ahimsa.' But in the edicts he says likewise as follows: 'If you, my children, do not follow my advice I have a sanction.' And what is that sanction? Capital punishment. That is, men were to be killed by Asoka if they were to kill an animal. This is the interpretation of Ahimsa in Indian history by the very champion and Avatar of Ahimsa.

These, then, are the two interpretations of Ahimsa. To-day Ahimsa is being made to mean a third thing. It is being treated as equivalent to non-war, the abandonment of violence or killing in organized human groups. One group of human beings is not to kill another group of human beings, and there is to be no state of war. This is a new proposition altogether different from non-malice and non-killing of animals. As I have already told you, I am here but to learn and I am trying to ascertain by discussions with you some of the facts of world-culture. Just at present the question is this: Does Asoka or does any Buddhist preacher or does even the Buddha himself ever banish war, i.e. organized violence as an instrument for the decision of affairs between two groups of human beings? Has war, i.e. killing of human beings in organized groups been declared immoral and illegal in any of the Indian legal and moral codes? I ask if Ahimsa in our Indian literature of the earliest times and of medieval times and later times has ever meant the renunciation

or annihilation of war, i.e. the abandonment of mutual killings between human groups. I should like to know on how many occasions and by whom war was ever declared unjustifiable, immoral, and illegal in Indian history.

So far as I am concerned, it is very difficult to quote satisfying instances from our Indian texts. In my judgement the concept of war as something illegal, immoral, unjustifiable is not an Indian doctrine. Ancient and medieval Indian thought, Hindu or Moslem, can lay no claim to this concept. It is a contribution of the Western world to the problem of relations between groups. It is a doctrine of modern times and modern civilization. This doctrine is the creation of Europeans and Americans in the nineteenth century. Perhaps you can trace it back historically to the eighteenth century and even earlier. I do not want to carry on antiquarian researches. So for the present, Ahimsa, meaning thereby pacifism in intergroup or international relations, is to be taken as an entirely modern category unknown in Indian political tradition, Indian philosophy, and Indian metaphysical literature.

I am not a politician or a party man. You are masters of your conscience and have right to be pacifists in international morality if you care to. But while preaching or practising pacifism you have no right to believe or to propagate that you are observing Ahimsa as known in ancient and medieval India. You may even give a new meaning to the old term Ahimsa if you so desire. But you must not father your own view on old India. As pacifists, you are following the modern Western thinkers, perhaps the Quakers, perhaps the socialists. May be, Jean Jaurés, the French socialist, is your Guru. But you cannot pretend to follow the Jaina Tirthankaras or the Buddhist preachers, who

were utterly innocent of the limitation or abandonment of wars. Neither Mahavira nor Buddha nor Asoka understood Ahimsa in the sense of international pacifism or socialist non-violence which you may be preaching to-day. I should be glad, as I said, to have extensive researches carried on into this interesting problem. In case Mahavira, Buddha or Asoka can be demonstrated to have forbidden warfare, i.e. organized killing between groups as inhuman, unpolitical, illegal, and abominable I should be very happy as an Indian to claim for my fatherland the originators of the cult, albeit purely speculative and theoretical, with which the names of Abbé St. Pierre, Immanuel Kant and others in the Western world are associated.

But situated as indology to-day is, I say that in the matter of militarist domination Indians are as good or as bad as Europeans. Take all the decades of Indian history and compare them with all the decades of European history, you will have nothing to choose between the two on the score of Ahimsa. The Chola Empire of Southern India was not based on Ahimsa. It was the result of blood and iron. Neither Alauddin nor Akbar encountered Ahimsa or practised it among the peoples of India, south, east or west. Take the Moghul Empire. What was it but a militarist-political domination? What was the Maratha Empire? Did it not embody the domination of one people over other peoples? The C.P., the U.P., and Gujarat need not be reminded of this fact. You cannot likewise ignore the fact that the Marathas as a people were the greatest world-conquerors of Indian history in the military-political fields. In my appraisal Shivaji was and continues to be the greatest Hindu of all ages. His exploits it was that rendered possible the establishment of

a military-political empire that became the greatest world-power on the Indian stage in the eighteenth century. In the interest of metaphysical neurosis or some psychological aberrations the world cannot be compelled to ignore and forget the history of the last two hundred years.

No historian dealing with objective facts can deny or suppress the militaristic-political qualities of the dozens of Shivajis and hundreds of little Sarva-bhaumas (world-rulers) that mother India produced from Vedic Sudas to Tipu, Baji, and Rājīt. The Hindus and Mussalmans of old India were not feeble-minded fools in any age of culture-history, whatever they may happen to be to-day.

IDEOLOGICAL IMPERIALISM

Up till now I have been talking of the militaristic-political domination. This is one kind of empire-building and imperialism. Now there is another kind of imperialism or domination. There one set of ideas is influenced, modified or conquered by another set, one system of morality is compelled to acknowledge the suzerainty or sovereignty of another system. The authority of another set of ideas, ideals, and institutions replaces that of a traditional set. The arts and sciences, philosophies, religions, *mores*, manners and customs, and gods and goddesses of one people are replaced by those of another people. This domination or imperialism is ideological. It is impersonal having hardly anything to do with any individual of flesh and blood.

Man is a brute by all means and tries to influence or conquer others physically and militarily. But it is also true that man is something of a non-brute, i.e. man has tried to listen to reason, and to accept reason. It is very inter-

esting to note that throughout the periods of militaristic-political domination, the domination of the other type, the ideological domination, ideological imperialism also has been going on, almost synchronous with the other imperialism. Very often the militaristic-political empire has had nothing to do with the ideological empire. Once in a while, the ideological empires have been established or influenced or promoted by military-political empires. But, as a rule, the two imperialisms have gone on independently of each other.

Let us take Islam or Christianity, which is older than Islam. As a system of ideas and ideals Christianity has conquered and dominated the world—by influencing, modifying, moderating and subjugating the local rites, ceremonies, institutions, moral ideas, and gods and goddesses. Christianity as a system of conversions is one of the greatest ideological imperialisms the world has known. In social science it is the custom to use the term acculturation for this conversion. When one country or people is adopting the religion, customs, and manners of another, the first is being acculturated to the second. Christianization is an instance of world-domination by an adopted religion. It is imperialism on the ideological plane. The Christian empire is not confined to any particular continent. It has succeeded in encompassing the entire world with more or less doses of success. The Islamization of mankind has been relatively less extensive.

I shall now mention another ideological imperialism. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it is possible to say, democracy has established an empire among all mankind. The French Revolution, the ideas of 1789, started the world on this path. To-day there is hardly anybody anywhere on earth that is not subject to the

ideals of democracy, whatever that may mean. The undeniable fact is that democratic ideology is one of the most inspiring forces and vital urges among all races. The domination of the human spirit by democratic idealism is a remarkable imperialism of modern times.

Similarly one of the greatest world-empires is being enjoyed by science. Is there any human being to-day in East or West anywhere in the world, who is not subject to the rule of science, to the sovereignty or empire of science?

A fourth ideological empire is that of technocracy and industrialism and, along with them, capitalism. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century capitalism has been enjoying an empire among all peoples: This is an impersonal empire like Christianity or Islam, democracy and science.

Exactly antithetic to capitalism is Marxism, the doctrine of Marx. Marxism or socialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been enjoying a world-empire. Its domination has reached even Asia including India. It is impossible for anybody to deny that socialism is directly or indirectly influencing the thoughts and activities of individuals here and there and everywhere. Socialism therefore is as great an ideological imperialism as Christianity or Islam, democracy, science, and capitalism.

So far I have mentioned the ideological imperialisms which are mainly non-Indian in origin. Does India afford illustrations of this second kind of imperialism? She does. India has given rise to ideas, ideals, Vidyas and Kalas, arts and sciences, manners and customs, philosophies, politics, moralities, religions, gods and goddesses, and sacred texts such as have conquered the world. Ideological imperialism is one of the greatest contributions of India to world-

culture. India as a maker of chapters in world-history is thus to be placed in two different fields, first, as a contributor to militaristic-political domination, and secondly, as a contributor to ideological imperialism. Empire-building of two different kinds is to be credited to the culture or creativity of the Indian people.

Let us try to understand our Hinduism. In the first place, Hinduism is a cult or a religion. It has its gods and goddesses, rituals and ceremonies. In the second place, Hinduism is a system of culture, institutions, social philosophies. It is a system of arts and sciences, manners, beliefs, and customs. Now, who established Hinduism? It was established by a small number of people, perhaps somewhere in the Punjab, or on the banks of the Indus, the Kabul, the Ravi, or the Bias. The creative persons were perhaps a little colony of half a dozen or several dozen people. We call them Rishis. What they called themselves we do not know. But they were creators, epoch-makers. These Rishis established what later became Hinduism. In the beginning their creation or culture was nothing more than the burning of wood. It was fire applied to a few pieces of wood in which ghre was to be burnt. Considered objectively, Yajna, Homa or sacrifice is the pragmatic form of Hinduism as a religion.

The Rishis who invented it were strong men, sturdily gymnasts, intellectual gymnasts and moral gymnasts who along with the fire propagated a powerful cult of *Pancha Mahayajna* (five great sacrifices or social duties). It was not some meaningless hocus-pocus that they started. They started a tremendous social dynamics embracing the multifarious interests of life in its entirety. And their motto was Charaiveti, march on, march on,

march on. That aggressiveness, that desire to proselytize, to influence, to convert, to go on conquering and to conquer is the kern of Hinduism as a religion. 'We have lit this little fire,' they said, 'but it is not to remain confined to this little colony, to this our village. It has to be spread farther and farther. We are not to stay at home. There is that river, the cult has to spread to it, that river over there has to be crossed. And from village to village, from forest to forest, and from river to river, and on and on, it has to march, conquer, missionize until the whole world comes under its domination.'

The Rishis taught Young India to say, 'Ahamasmi sahamana, etc.' 'Mighty am I, superior by name upon the earth, conquering am I, all-conquering, completely conquering every region.' This is the inspiration of Hinduism, the cult of Charaiveti (march on), the culture of Digvijaya (world-conquest), the philosophy of world-conversion.

This is not the mere enthusiasm of half a dozen nervous, rickety, malaria-stricken people, but the declaration of faith of those who actually marched on from one river to another and crossed one hill-top after another. The whole of India has come under their domination. Finally, an ideological empire has been established by what, in our ignorance or absence of a better term, we describe as Hinduism. Hinduism is a world-conquering cult and culture, determined to organize missions in order to civilize or dominate the world. Hinduization is acculturation of diverse races, peoples and regions to Hindu norms and *mores*. I said that Christianity (or Islam), democracy, science, capitalism and socialism are ideological imperialisms or impersonal dominations and that these five isms or systems

enjoy a world-position. Now as students, as mere intellectuals, you and I cannot but objectively recognize Hinduism, understood whether as a system of cult or of culture, as another specimen of ideological world-imperialism of raceless, cosmopolitan and impersonal character.

I am using the term 'world-empire' in connection with Hinduism as a religion and as a culture. This is not a hyperbole. In the first place, my conception of the world is to be recalled as consisting in the very neighbourhood of the creative individual. Thus considered, the smallest territorial area conceivable can be aptly described as the conqueror's world. In the second place, India is a huge sub-continent, a world by itself. And last but not least, I ask the question: Is Hinduism confined to India? No.

The spirit of India has not rested content within the boundaries of the Indian sub-continent. Afghanistan and Central Asia were conquered by our Hindu religion and Hindu culture. Likewise was China conquered and it is in that conquest that we have to see the deeper significance of the Chinese Goodwill Mission of to-day. Burma and Siam were also similarly Hinduized. Go to Siam and you will find that the names of rulers over there are derived from Rama, Vikrama, Varman, Jaya, Indra, Ananda, etc. Go to Indo-China, there also you will encounter Hindu culture in daily life. In Sumatra, Java and the other Insulindian islands as well as in far-off Japan Hinduization is likewise manifest in temples, gods and goddesses, rituals and ceremonies. Korea, Manchuria, Mongolia, Siberia, Turkistan,—all these regions of Asia are to be recognized to a certain extent as the colonies of Hindu cult and Hindu culture. In one word, the whole of northern, southern and eastern Asia

bears traces of Hindu ideological imperialism. This represents the domination of Hindu ideology over others, their acculturation to Hindu ideas and ideals.

Is Western Asia to be treated as outside the sphere of influence of Hindu imperialism? No. Hindu arts and sciences, algebra, arithmetic, *Ayurveda*, therapeutics, metallurgy, fables, stories, philosophies, crossed the Himalaya mountains and the Khyber Pass. Hindu ideas were assimilated by the Iranian, Hellenic, Hellenistic and Romanized peoples. They were, later, accepted as the arts and sciences of the Muslims, the Saracens of Baghdad. From the latter they passed on to the Europeans who accepted them as some of the foundations of their mathematics, chemistry, medicine, etc. Thus our Hindu ideals, manners and sentiments which began at Mohenjodaro in Sindh and in the Punjab have spread everywhere in Asia and to a certain extent in Europe. Hinduism is then by all means a world-imperialism.

These Hindu spheres of influence were so many 'Greater Indias' in Asia. The expansion of India consisted in the establishment of the ideological imperialism of Hindu cult and culture throughout the length and breadth of the Asian continent. These colonizing, missionizing or proselytizing enterprises of the Indians outside the Indian frontiers may be said to have commenced in the third century B. C. The active period of the Digvijaya (world-conquest) or Charaiveti (march on) of Hindu religion, arts and sciences continued until the thirteenth or fourteenth century. During these sixteen or seventeen hundred years India witnessed military-political vicissitudes of all sorts almost identical with those in contemporary Europe. The ideological dominations of the Hindus as established in the

different regions of Asia were not necessarily the functions of their military and political activities at home or abroad. This is an important item in connection with the ideological imperialism of the Hindus in ancient and medieval times which must never be lost sight of.

I have said before that the ideological empires of the world, viz., Christianity, socialism, etc. have no necessary connection with military-political imperialism. The two imperialisms are mainly independent of each other. If there is any contact between the two, that contact is often an accident. But scientifically speaking, it is impossible to demonstrate that political imperialism has been the cause and the only cause of ideological imperialism. The same is to be observed about Hindu ideological imperialism *vis-à-vis* Hindu political activities. The Hindu conquests in Asia from one end to the other were in the main non-political, non-military. Our ancient Indian culture went to Japan and was accepted by Japan but the Japanese knew hardly anything of Indian political and military achievements. If you take the case of Sumatra, Java, Bali, Borneo and other islands where Hindu culture still persists, you will find that they were not, if at all, under the political domination of the South Indian Cholas for any long period. Political imperialism was hardly ever the basis of the ideological imperialism established by the Hindus. Indeed, militaristic-political domination may be removed almost entirely from the picture. No matter how many large, medium or small states were being established on Indian soil during this millennium and a half, no matter how many times we were fighting among ourselves, the conquests made by Hinduism as a religion and as a culture were going on from one country

to another. The authors of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, Manu, Buddha, Panini, Charaka, Patanjali, Nagarjuna, and Kalidasa were all the time conquering the world, very often supremely indifferent to the militaristic-political fortunes of their compatriots.

The story of all these ideological imperialisms or dominations, Indian as well as non-Indian, proves beyond question that almost invariably their pro-

gress is independent of political imperialisms or dominations. In order to be established as a dominant world-force an ideology does not have always to be backed up by a powerful political people or party. Indeed, the opposite picture is prominent on several occasions when 'captive Greece captured Rome.' Even a political slave can ideologically conquer the master.

(To be continued)

THE GREAT MARCH

BY SWAMI NIRVEDANANDA

A creature on earth is ushered into existence, apparently, to eat, grow, and reproduce its kind. Obviously, it eats to grow and grows to replenish the earth. After that, its life's part seems to be played out, and it has to wait only to be swept off the stage by death.

Nature, whoever or whatever she may be, appears to be determined to carry on her business of creation. This is her imperious demand. Her innate urge for creation releases a mysterious and inexhaustible force that brings into being, nurtures, utilizes as a helpless agent of creation and then throws away the thing we call a creature. It appears to be no more than a mere link in an infinite chain of creation, a mere instrument brought in and played upon by this inscrutable force for fulfilling the imperious demand of Nature. This force is persistently at work to see to the continuity of creation through the multiplication of individuals. This is the 'Life Force,' the 'universal creative energy' that has been introduced so eloquently by George Bernard Shaw in his *Man and Superman*.

Man being just a species of the biological world has to feel his helplessness

under the terrible grip of this mysterious Life Force. Looked at from this angle, he is, like any other creature, nothing more than a mere tool worked by the universal creative energy. His ego may magnify what he calls his personality, in his delirious self-complacence he may dream of living in Utopias of freedom, but so far as his existence on the biological plane is concerned, he is a bond-slave of Nature, a mere device for ensuring the continuity of his species.

This is why sex plays such an important part in human life. The almost irresistible sex appeals are meant to entrap the parties so that Nature may use them up for her purpose. Sex urge is nothing but Nature's urge for creation appearing through the individual. Individuals do not matter except almost as puppets in Nature's game. Personal relations through love, thrill, and all that have little meaning except as hypnotic spells for luring the parties to execute Nature's behest. This appears to be the brutal fact concealed so skillfully beneath the fascinating trappings of poetry and romance. Indeed, so far as the life phenomena are concerned, man is almost on the same level with all

other animals. There is hardly any material difference. No wonder, therefore, that the Freudians have come to look upon sex urge, lying deep beneath the conscious mind, as the prime-mover of the human machine.

But life alone does not explain the human complex. In the lower strata of the biological world one may trace the existence of a rudimentary mind, which at that stage of evolution is no more than a mere handmaid of the great Life Force; but, in man, mind certainly is no less prominent a factor than life. It is this developed mind that alone has created the gulf between man and the rest of the animals and established his suzerainty over them all.

Food and progeny are no longer his only concerns. He has innate and insatiable cravings for Truth (Satyam), Good (Shivam), and Beauty (Sundaram). This persistent mental urge has led man to create a world of his own, namely, the world of culture. His search for Truth has given birth to religion, philosophy, science, history etc.; his quest for Good has brought in medicine, surgery, hygiene, sanitation, education, politics, economics, agriculture, industries etc., and filled the world with social service institutions of various kinds and dimensions; and his longing for Beauty has furnished the earth with literature, music, painting, sculpture, architecture etc. All these constitute the world of culture created by the human mind. And it is ever expanding.

It is this creative urge of the human mind that gives a meaning and value to the existence of life. The amoeba struggles blindly to evolve into a man, and man struggles to attain his innate ideal of Truth, Good, and Beauty.

Moreover, human mind has an immortal craze for freedom. It instinctively abhors vassalage of any sort. It refuses to be swayed helplessly by

any one, even by nature, external or internal. It wants to understand, grasp, control, and direct the forces so that man may rise triumphantly above Nature. His rebel mind is out for conquering Nature. Nothing less can satisfy him.

But the creative urge of Mind and that of Life are at cross-roads. One has to operate at the expense of the other. This is why a man cannot afford to be as sensual as a beast. Still less can he, if he happen to be an ardent votary of science, art or philosophy. And it is only when Mind throws off completely the yoke of Life that it realizes its ideal of Truth, Good, Beauty, and Freedom as no other than Divinity within and about him.

It is then and then only that man reaches the state of a Buddha or Christ, the embodiment of perfection towards which the entire world of life is ceaselessly struggling to move. It is then that he realizes that the ideals he had been pursuing all along are nothing but so many facets of his own Divine Self. The Divinity was there even in the amoeba under a thick incrustation of Nature, as it were, and its entire journey through myriad strata of biological existence right up to Buddhahood is nothing but a progressive clearance of the surrounding crust. God puts on a veil, as it were, to appear as a tiny cell, and then goes through a process of gradually tearing off the veil till He does that completely and appears as Buddha, the enlightened one. This is His play of hide and seek. This is why all through the progressive march of the amoeba towards Buddhahood the motive force appears to be an 'incessant aspiration to higher organization, wider, deeper, intenser self-consciousness, and clearer self-understanding.'

When man once understands this and has a clear grasp of the goal of all his struggles, he tries consciously to quicken

his march. He develops his will which has infinite potentiality, puts a brake on all the impulses that stand in his way and concentrates all his energy, vital as well as mental, for manifesting the Divinity within him. Thus begins his spiritual journey towards a complete self-consciousness, a thorough understanding of himself and the universe about him and a fulfilment of all his noble aspirations for achieving Truth, Good, Beauty, and Freedom, in a word, for attaining Perfection, which has ever been the unswerving aim of all his endeavours throughout his life's career.

Of course, it is up to man to surrender himself absolutely to the Life-force and behave like a brute. But this he can do only for a time, and even then he is not happy. His mental urge for other and higher things gives him no rest, no contentment till the Divinity within him manifests Itself completely. He has to be born again and again and go through repeated shocks of disillusionment till he is able to grasp the real import of all his struggles, the destination of his life's journey. Till this consciousness dawns

on him, he has perforce to drift, swayed mainly by the Life-Force and buffeted by a discontented mind. This is why the bulk of humanity, in spite of its vaunted culture, appears to have scarcely stepped above the plane of brutes. The plane of Divinity is a far cry. Yet this plane is its destined goal and to rise up to this plane is the conscious or unconscious aim of all its efforts.

Indeed, civilization has to be measured by the steps humanity takes towards this goal. The more will men be made conscious of this fact, the speedier will be the advance of true civilization. Buddha and Christ, Shankara and Chaitanya, in fact, all prophets, all seers, and all saints of different ages and different climes strove to stir up this consciousness by the inspiring examples of their hallowed lives. The confusion at the present moment, however, regarding the goal of human life and civilization is more intense than that in any other epoch in the history of mankind. It is significant, therefore, that the blessed goal of the great march has been illumined over again in our days by Ramakrishna and Vivekananda.

If we have known the Atman as It is, if we have known that there is nothing else but this Atman, that everything else is but a dream, with no existence in reality, then this world with its poverties, its miseries, its wickedness and its goodness will cease to disturb us.



—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

THE PROBLEM OF 'BECOMING'—A VEDANTIC VIEW

BY BRAHMACHARI BHAKTICHAITANYA

Very early in the history of philosophy thinkers began to inquire about the nature of the cosmic process and the stuff the universe is made of. Can everything in the universe be resolved into some elementary 'stuff,' such, for instance, as matter or spirit? Is there only one ultimate reality at the basis of the changing phenomena of nature? Or, is it possible that the elementary 'substance' cannot be reduced to one ultimate form, but in the last analysis they are two ultimate forms of being, such as matter and spirit? Many philosophers of all times have tried to get a systematic theory of the origination of the universe, its relation with the uncaused First Cause, its purpose and its relation to man and his destiny. Attempts have been made to explain this mystery of the universe-process either by a theory of materialistic monism or by a spiritualistic monism or by a mere pluralism. The Indian thinkers have answered this question from various standpoints which are as reasonable as they are appealing. The Vedantic non-dualism of the *qualified type* which gives a composite view of the universe is distinguished by the following characteristics :—

- I. The objective realities which we experience through our sense-organs are not dismissed as erroneous appearances but are accepted as facts.
- II. The origination of the universe is a beginningless process in which the principle of causality is not to be understood in the ordinary sense, that is, an agent producing a particular

effect. The one ultimate reality (Brahman) in its state of non-manifestation is the cause and in its state of manifestation is the effect. Cause and effect are same at the bottom; for the cause is nothing but an effect before a tangible change (Parināma) as a mere antecedent in time.

- III. The world of matter and sentient beings is like an organism and constitutes the body of Brahman as it were. Matter and souls are parts of one unitary being which pervades and interpenetrates everything.
- IV. In spite of the distinction between matter and spirit, Brahman unites everything in itself by its dynamic power. This highest reality is neither an absolute homogeneous being nor a weak unitary being undergoing an essential change.
- VI. The universe does not owe its existence to anything independent from Brahman, the first principle. It springs by a process of real evolution which suggests the motive for the emanation.

BRAHMAN DOES NOT CHANGE

Let us take for instance a gold ring. A nugget of gold as the general cause of the gold ring, has undergone a real change and participates in all the imperfections of the thing fashioned out of it. Similarly does not the theory of Brahman also undergoing a modification

introduce imperfections into the highest Brahman? This illustrative instance proves only that the whole universe has Brahman for its causal substance just as gold is the causal matter of every golden ornament, and not that Brahman becomes imperfect and limited by the modification.

Brahman, free from all imperfections and limitations, has for its body the entire universe, with all its sentient and non-sentient beings. At the end of an aeon when this world has been gradually reabsorbed in Brahman, there remains in the last analysis only the elementary matter,¹ which is so extremely subtle that it seems to have become one with Brahman; then Brahman, endowed with the power of realizing all its purposes, resolves² again to manifest a universe-body, constituted by matter and mind (sentient beings) and distinguished by names and forms as in the previous aeon. Then it modifies itself (Parināmayati) by gradually evolving the universe-body in the inverse order in which the reabsorption had taken place. Here 'modification' (Parināma) means, that the highest Brahman, which had been the universal Self in its causal state, abides, in its effected state also as the universal Self of different, chang-

ing phenomena. Thus Brahman alone is the material as well as the operative cause of the universe.

Though the untrained mind looks upon causality as sequence in time, the Vedānta inculcates the non-difference of cause and effect. When a jar is made from a lump of clay, it receives a new name and a shape as distinguished from its causal state. When the jar is destroyed, it loses its former configuration while yet the clay persists. One and the same substance receives different names and forms according to its various states. Origination and destruction are modifications of one and the same substance. In this way Vedānta establishes the non-difference of the cause from the effect. But Brahman never undergoes an essential change. If it essentially transforms itself into enjoying souls and objects of enjoyment, it will not only destroy its real nature, but also it ceases to be the Supreme Lord of projection and reabsorption. Then, if Brahman does not undergo an absolute change, what substance in it modifies itself into the universe?

THE BODY OF BRAHMAN ALONE CHANGES

Brahman has sentient (souls) and non-sentient (matter) beings for its body, and constitutes the inner and universal Self of that body. The expansion (Vikāsha) and contraction (Sankocha) in its effected and causal states do not belong to Brahman *itself*, but to the sentient and the non-sentient beings. Thus all the imperfections of the body do not affect Brahman at all, and similarly the essential attributes of Brahman do not extend to its body, as in the same manner the inner self of an individual is not at all affected by birth, childhood, youth, old age, and death, which are the attributes of the body.

¹ The successive absorption of everything forming Brahman's body is as follows:— 'The earth is merged in water, water in fire, fire in air, air in the ether, the ether in the sense-organs, the sense-organs in the Tanmātras, the Tanmātras in the gross elements, the gross elements in the great principle, the great principle in the Un-evolved, the Un-evolved in the Imperishable, the Imperishable is merged in Darkness: Darkness becomes one with the highest Divinity' Subala Upanishad.

² 'He desired, may I be many, may I grow forth. He brooded over himself, and having thus brooded he sent forth all whatever there is. Having sent forth he entered it. Having entered it he became Sat and Tyat, defined and undefined, supported and non-supported, knowledge and non-knowledge, real and unreal' Taittiriya Upanishad II. 6.

All kinds of modifications are confined to matter and all imperfections (according to their Karma) are limited to the souls. Brahman is *effected* in that sense only that it is still the unchanging Self of sentient and non-sentient beings even when they are evolving into names and forms. Whether matter and souls are in a state of evolution or involution, Brahman always abides as the unborn and the immutable Real, having knowledge and bliss for its attributes. Thus the so-called 'Becoming' of Brahman in no way exhausts its own real nature.

THE PURPOSE OF PROJECTION AND ABSORPTION

If Brahman, the highest and the only Reality, had projected this world of manifold souls and matter, it would be accused of partiality in so far as Brahman would be instrumental in making its beings experience all kinds of suffering,—physical, mental, and spiritual. How to account for the inequalities of life in health, wealth, and environment? Again how are we to reconcile the existence of evil with belief in the highest Reality, which is conceived as God of love? How is it that the unborn³ and free souls who participate in all the perfections of Brahman are born again and again? The individual selves along with matter form an eternal stream. The individual souls are the masters of their own destiny, being endowed with Free Will. By the performance of good deeds they can evolve higher and higher by manifesting the Divine power, and finally attain the highest state in

Brahman, or by the performance of evil deeds⁴ they can sink into the lower forms of existence, connecting themselves with the material bodies.

When Brahman contracts its modes (matter and souls), the individual selves with their Karma abide in an extremely subtle state without the differentiation of any name and form. The same thing holds good with regard to matter also. If the selves would not contract with the effect of their deeds, there would result in the next manifestation all sorts of confusion, in which, probably, good souls would be sharing the bitter fruits of life, and the impure souls the good fruits. The potentiality of Karma causes the difference in nature and status of the embodied beings in their subsequent births. Thus the individual souls who already possess their own Karma require only an operative cause for their embodiment. Brahman, which is different from everything else, projects the universe in order to give expression for the souls in accordance with their Karma. The Ultimate Reality, as the Creator and God of love is always ready to help those who want to help themselves in reaching the highest goal of life. Though Brahman is beyond good and evil, the embodied beings have to realize the ideals of moral life, as the absolute is the source of all spiritual values and the goal of all moral endeavour.

It was already pointed out in the previous paragraphs that we cannot ascribe to Brahman actual causality with regard to the universe-process, though the evolution seems to suggest some kind of purpose. How can the Absolute which has no desire to ful-

³ 'The intelligent one is not born and dies not' Katha Upanishad I. ii. 18.

⁴ 'Dost thou know both Prakriti and the soul to be without beginning' Bhagavad-Gita XIII. 19.

⁴ 'He who performs good works becomes good, he who performs bad works becomes bad. He becomes pure by pure deeds, bad by bad deeds' Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV. iv. 5.

fill, project the world comprising souls endowed with free will and matter for the enjoyment or suffering of the individuals? There cannot be any 'why' for this problem. Brahman who is beyond any vestige of desire has nothing to gain by projections and re-absorptions. The only motive seems to be that of play or sport. Thus the projection, sustenance, and reabsorption of the universe depend on the creative will of Brahman for mere sport.

THE UNBORN SOUL

Now we have to discuss the problem whether the manifold forms of existence, which constitute Brahman's body in their totality, are co-eternal with Brahman, or originate from it and are reabsorbed into it at particular intervals. The entire matter comprising the five elementary substances originates from Brahman. The order is as follows:—The ether springs from Brahman as its first effect; air springs from ether; fire springs from air; water springs from fire, and earth from water.⁴ The origination of one element from the other is not from the immediately preceding cause, but directly from Brahman who constitutes the self of the immediately preceding substance. At the end of an aeon

the reabsorption of the elements takes place in the inverse order of their projection. This is as far as the elements are concerned. Now it becomes a matter of utmost importance to discuss whether the individual soul also originates from Brahman in the same way as that of matter. The individual soul is eternal, unborn,⁵ and therefore unlike the elements, not produced from Brahman at the time of emission. We have to note an important difference between the elements and the souls. When Brahman is in the so-called causal state, the elements abide in such a very subtle condition that they possess none of the attributes which later on render them as objects of experience for the sentient beings; hence when they are changing into the gross state, they are said to *originate*; on the other hand, the change that the souls undergo at the time of emission is only a certain expansion (Vikāsha) of intelligence, in contrast with its contracted (Sankocha) state during the preceding involution, capacitating them to experience the various bodies of matter according to the effect of their Karma. The soul is always a cognizing agent in all states and abides in Brahman as its part (Amīsha). This change of the soul is not at all an *essential* change, and hence we have to characterize it as eternal and unborn in contrast with the material elements which at the time of emission undergo an essential change.

RELATION OF SOULS AND MATTER TO BRAHMAN

The next question we have to discuss is the nature of the relation in which

⁴ This process seems to have some similarity with the pre-sophistic philosophy. Thales believed that everything springs out of water and refunded to water. Anaximander (611-545 B.C.) wanted to explain the water itself. He believed in an eternal substance out of which everything springs. According to Anaximenes (588-524 B.C.) the original stuff is air or vapour which is one and infinite. From air all things originate by refraction and condensation. By the process of refraction air becomes fire, fire the wind, wind becomes cloud, water, earth, and stone respectively. The eternal motion is the operative cause for all changes. None the less the origination and evolution of cosmos as propounded by the Indian thinkers seem to be more systematic.

⁵ 'There are two unborn ones, one intelligent and strong, the other non-intelligent and weak' Shvetashvatara Upanishad I. 9.

'Unborn, eternal, everlasting is that ancient one; he is not killed though the body is killed' Katha Upanishad I. xii. 18.

the sentient and the non-sentient beings constitute the outward form of Brahman. The individual souls are many⁷ and are parts (Amsha) of Brahman, having intelligence for their essential nature.⁸ Brahman and the individual souls stand to each other in the relation of a whole and a part, the former being like a luminous body and the latter like light. By part we have to understand that which forms a particular place of a thing; a part is a qualifying (Visheshana) attribute of a thing, qualified by that attribute. Light is an attribute not to be realized apart from the luminous body, and therefore forms a part of that luminous substance. Hence a part of a thing is the essential part of the whole. At the same time the light is of a nature different from the luminous body, as the distinguishing attribute, namely, the light cannot be identified with the thing distinguished, the luminous body. Analogously the individual soul and the highest Self stand to each other in the relation of a part and the whole, the former being essentially different from the latter as a distinguishing attribute and non-different from it as a part is one

with the whole. Like a lighthouse, though situated in one place, spreads its powerful beams all around for miles and miles, Brahman also projects its rays of souls by its power (Shakti).

In what relation does the non-sentient matter stand to Brahman? Matter also stands to Brahman in the same relation as that of the sentient beings. Though matter is different from Brahman, yet it forms a part, being one of the distinguishing attributes. Brahman, distinguished by sentient beings and non-sentient beings in their subtle condition is the cause; distinguished by the same beings in their gross condition is the effect. Thus the effect is identical with the cause, and by the knowledge of the cause the effect is known.

The process of the evolution of material universe has to be conceived as a real manifestation of Brahman's wonderful power. Ultimately the material world may be viewed as 'unreal' if we take the term 'real' in its absolute sense. In a gold ring originating from a nugget of gold, we perceive the property of the causal substance, the gold. But the ring has no independent existence apart from its cause. As an effect viewed apart from its causal substance is unreal, we can say that the entire universe, viewed apart from Brahman, is not very substantial. What is material is unsubstantial in a way, when compared with the highest spiritual Absolute from which the material universe has emanated. But this relative unreality cannot constitute the absolute unreality of the material stuff.

⁷ 'He who, eternal and intelligent, fulfills the desires of many, who likewise are eternal and intelligent' Chhandogya Upanishad II. v. 18.

⁸ 'One part (quarter) of it are all beings, three feet (quarters) of it are the Immortal heaven' Chhandogya Upanishad III. xii. 6.

'An eternal part of Myself becomes the individual soul (Jiva) in the world of life' Bhagavad-Gita XV. 7.

Writer's note:—All the texts quoted in connection with this article have been taken from George Thibaut's translations.

CULTURE AND WAR

BY A. VENKATPA SASTRI, M.A.

The subject is not 'War and Culture' but 'Culture and War.' So stated it makes a difference. To put it in the first way is to make of culture a thing apart, academic, unrelated to war, standing absolved from all duties and obligations in time of war, and then to consider the reactions of war upon culture as upon other normal occupations. Culture in this order would seem to be relegated to a passive, subordinate position. On the other hand to transpose the words so as to read 'Culture and War' is to conceive culture dynamically in relation to war, to credit it with initiative in the face of a crisis, in brief, to regard it as an adequate equipment of personality capable of response to any set of circumstances.

WHAT IS CULTURE?

There is a notion hard to die that culture is a Cyrenaic rule of life, that it inclines to repose and quietude, that it is a decorative asset during peace times making social intercourse seemly, stylish, and delightfully sophisticated, but that it shrinks from war, and that at the first signal of war seeks a shy retreat and not unlikely finds its grave, or, at any rate, keeps in abeyance or a state of suspended animation during the period of war. In opposition to this view it is argued in the following article that *culture is neither a pacifist nor a militant conception essentially but an attitude to LIFE which comprehends situations of war and peace both.* Culture is a philosophic (in the liberal sense) temper or disposition of mind adjusting itself to the ever varying

circumstances, not by any prudential or tactical considerations but by a 'high seriousness that comes from absolute sincerity,' preferring the right to the convenient and guided by the voice of reason and reflection, and not slogans. As popularly understood, culture stands for a certain polish of speech, grace of manner, elegance of costume, a general air of geniality, and all that is indicated by the term 'good form.' It bespeaks a mind at peace with itself, happy in the possession of material comfort and security, avoiding excesses of any kind and feeling its very principle of life threatened when keyed up to high pressure. It hates all dullness and little understands the high stakes for which keen, eager souls fling away comfort and court suffering and tribulation.

There are those who inscribe peace on their banners and march through life with a steady pulse and an unhurried step whatever upheavals and cataclysms might be blowing about their ears. They cling to peace at all cost. They cannot survive the wreckage of peace. All compromise is admissible in the interests of so-called peace to these folk. War, in their eyes, is all blood and shambles; it can have no justifying motive, no mind, no conscience behind it. So they keep neutral and nonchalant when the red fury catches and desolation and havoc stalk the land. Their attitude is craven at bottom, and socially disastrous.

Others shape their life to a battle-cry. Peace is what they cannot endure; it engages but half their energies. Their blood dances to a war-rhythm. They need no provocation but find contention

in every cause. Various might be the inspiration of a bellicose mentality. It is no part of the aim of this article to analyse the causes of war,—economic, commercial, political and religious. If some are impelled by acquisitive greed, the more romantic may be stirred to action by the adventure and glamour of war.

The neighing steed and the shrill
trump,
The spirit-stirring drum, the
ear-piercing life,
The royal banner, and all quality,
‘Pride, pomp, and circumstance of
glorious war,’

constitute a pageantry which their imagination cannot resist. Life to them is a soldierly business, an unceasing campaign. The furnace must be roaring all the time.

But culture in the exalted and inherent sense of it is nothing rigid and stereotyped, neither committed to war nor peace. A fluid supple adaptation is the hall-mark of culture distinguished from ignoble opportunism by the presence of a whole mass of convictions or organized beliefs predetermining the broad line of conduct. Etymologically, culture—from Latin ‘*colere*’ meaning *to till* and *to worship*—presupposes a capacity for work and meditation. Noble vision, unerring perceptions reflected in daily conduct, intelligent and spontaneous response to the shifting play of circumstance in life, happily tuning itself to peace if that be honourable, girding up for brave adventure, resistance of oppression and tyranny if the moment requires it,—that is true culture. It results from a happy harmony of the practical and the contemplative which are generally considered to go ill together. To make culture merely contemplative is to mutilate it, to make it a hot-house product, a

remote abstraction with no earthly roots. On the other hand, to reduce it to a practical ethic, a mere instrument of doing, to be recognized only in deeds and demonstrations, is to degrade it and impoverish it of its richer content of mind and soul. Culture is a synthetic way of life, a crystallized wisdom, not bound to any hard and fast rule, but electrically reacting to the constant flux and reflux of life.

Culture meant to Arnold ‘Sweetness and Light.’ He laid just emphasis on the intellectual and speculative elements of culture as a corrective to what he called ‘the predominance of Hebraism’—the preoccupation with doing, conduct, and obedience. He was perhaps reacting also against the Teutonic theory of force or strength vehemently preached by Carlyle to men of his generation and which dangerously sounded like a defence of ‘might is right.’ Sir S. Radhakrishnan in his lectures on ‘Freedom and Culture’ adds a third term ‘Strength’ making the concept virile. But culture itself essentially is larger than any particular virtue. It is a psychological outlook, a content of personality central and deeper than any single manifestation of behaviour, and indeed commensurate with the whole wide sphere of life with its complexities, contradictions, and anomalies. So interpreted, culture becomes finely adequate to the rough and revolutionary temper of war no less than to the halcyon spaces, the lucid intervals of calm for which, of course, it has a preconceived harmony, an inner law of attraction and adjustment.

A culture that covers and crouches for a retreat at the first indications of war, a culture that hides weakness, sloth, and sophistication under the mask of pacifism is a false, maimed, and decadent culture as much as the variety that deliberately and fanatically seeks

power led the way to militarism. 'The blood and iron' of Bismarck is but a translation into political idiom and actual policy of Nietzsche's power philosophy. Treitsche and General Von Bernhardi glorified war as the one means of national regeneration. And now comes Hitler kindling the flames of war ostensibly to right the wrongs of the Treaty of Versailles but really venting against the democracies a rank accumulation of repressed revenge and hate. All this surely makes war of a different complexion from that reluctantly, though not less manfully, waged by the man of culture.

The man of culture will be fair to his opponent, mind the cause more than the personalities in the conflict, and scrupulously observe the rules of the game. Mention of personalities brings to mind the modern methods of propaganda during war time, of camouflaging the motives, vilifying the foe, suppressing truth and suggesting falsehood. The late Mr. C. F. Andrews exposes the 'Falsehood in War' in an article of that caption contributed to the *Indian Review*, March 1920.

Culture in the prosecution of a war manifests itself as high chivalry. It should be possible to trace the culture of a people by their conduct of war. The code of honour of the age of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the conversion to pacifism of Ashoka, the noble warfare of the Rajputs, the magnanimity of Akbar to his foes, the acknowledged courtesy of Shivaji to women and prisoners of war, the later military tradition of the Sikhs constitute so many landmarks in the annals of Indian chivalry. Numerous instances might be given from each one of the above to illustrate ideal conduct on the battle ground.

Engaged in war, right in the midst of the broil, the man of culture wist-

fully longs for the prospect of peace beyond. He is eager for the termination of hostilities. And when victory arrives, he does not exploit the position of the fallen and the low but deals justly by them sowing the seeds of reconciliation and future co-operation for common ends. Here we cannot forget how, tactless treaties and iniquitous impositions generate the poison of revenge and drive hostilities but deeper underground to explode with added violence at the psychological moment. There are those who lay the blame of the present catastrophe on Germany being made to eat humble pie at the Treaty of Versailles. Charity is conspicuous by its lack in the settlement of terms at the end of a war.

To sum up, a manly bearing in the face of aggression, reluctance to be drawn into the vortex of conflict but not out of cowardice, a high chivalry in the actual prosecution of the war, unalloyed joy at the peace that follows war, and a rare sense of justice and fair play in settling the issues untainted by malice and hate—these reveal the man of culture.

CULTURE AND THE TECHNIQUE OF WAR

From the standpoint of culture the mode of fighting is more than a matter of technique. Ethical values enter the consideration. In the face of aggression there are two possible modes of resistance,—meeting violence with violence which is the way of the world, or opposing to it pity, love, and suffering which is the way of Socrates, Christ, Tolstoy, and Gandhi. The latter is none the less fighting because you choose to suffer and 'resist not evil.' 'Passive resistance is a misnomer.' It is about the most resolute opposition, not with weapons of violence, but a trained will and a chastened soul that can be con-

ceived, an emanation of the spirit, a release of the energies of the whole man. The world to-day being organized in terms of violence it may appear necessary to retaliate in terms of violence. But violence has always existed. And it is rather our deficiency and lack of adequate spiritual training than any external barriers that hinder our advance. The method of Christ and Gandhi has no demonstrative or spectacular value comparable with the pyrotechnics of modern warfare. It is a process of permeation, of the slow radiation of an aura and an atmosphere, of a silent spiritual transformation. The fight need not be any the less tough because of the choice of this method; nor can the name of warrior be denied

to the valiant non-resister. Only the traditional standards do not apply.

The choice of the technique reflects the culture of the man. Culture at its highest adjoins the weapons of violence altogether. The discipline of personality, the balancing and purifying of emotions, the discrimination of values which culture achieves will rule out violence as crude and unsatisfactory in the end. But whichever of the two ways the man chooses, the way of violence or the way of non-violence, his culture leavens his policy. Culture purges war of its crudities, and imparts to it a touch of grace and high consecration. The humanization of violence is the function of culture when, for any reason, it has not transcended it.

RELIGION AND MEN'S NEED OF IT

BY P. NAGARAJA RAO, M.A.

The contemporary mood of the Modern is to hate religion as such, and attribute all the ills of the world as having their origin in religion. Marx has accused all the philosophers of the world as having *interpreted* Reality and *not changed* it. He has equated religion with the opium of the mind. A reflective inquiry of the contemporary challenge to religion lays bare the fact that religion and its workings have not been construed in a proper manner. Religion has not been vanquished by all the modern creeds, be it socialism or psycho-analysis. Man's essential need to believe can never be eradicated. The need to believe or the 'will to believe' as James puts it is instinct with man. The Fascist leader and the communist autocrat have taken the place of the gods of religion. The regimented

political parties are the modern substitutes of religious institutions. Ceremonies and rituals are not wanting in modern creeds.

The enemies of religion are legion.¹ Totalitarianism of the left and the right varieties, Nationalism,² which leads to Imperialism, Secularism, Humanism, and Dogmatism etc. These are the false religions of our age. Each one of them expects man to surrender his all to the creed, and effect a complete self-effacement.

But more than all these things what is it that makes man to believe in a God and a religion? What are the

¹ Author's article—'Religion, True and False' *Madras University Journal Jan. 1941.*

² Indian nationalism is unique, it is an urge to freedom from alien domination. In this respect it differs from other nationalisms.

postulates of religion? How can we realize them? The Rationalists of the West from the time of Socrates and Plato have insisted upon knowledge as the sole and true guide of man. If a man is rational, there is nothing, they said, that is to be desired of him. Knowledge and Reason makes man perfect. Hence they believed in omnipotent Reason as the perceptor of man. Virtue they said is knowledge. Evil is error and all the sins of mankind are said to be due to weakness in the brain than wickedness at heart. But human life and experience point out that knowledge as understood by the Greek humanists and modern scientists has not the capacity to make us virtuous. We know more about the ways of the world than our grandfathers. It is not in knowledge or insight that we are wanting. To know the good and to pursue the evil has been the all too common characteristic of mankind. What we need is not insight, but a will to give effect to our knowledge. This is the problem of temptation. St. Paul puts it thus: 'The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.' The ancient Sanskrit poet has echoed the same sentiment: 'I know the Dharma, but somehow I am not able to tread its path, I know what is not Dharma, but I am not able to desist from it.'³ It is at this juncture that we need a God to strengthen our will and enable us to give effect to our knowledge.

Such a need can only be satisfied by a religion based on faith. Men are driven mad to-day to make an idol of the State and to accord to the State the reverence due to God in the vain hope of satisfying it. The very spiritual vagrancy of our times is a sure sign

of the fact that we cannot desperately endeavour to fill the spiritual vacuum, by running after all manner of strange gods and sacrificing our selves at every conceivable savage altar. What we need is faith. The postulate of religion is that we must have faith in a spiritual principle as governing the universe. Faith is not a substitute nor a consolation for ignorance. It is a way of knowing other than the way of the intellect. It is a necessary fulfilment and completion of the imperfect apprehension. It is this faith that is at the heart of religion. It is a means both of overcoming temporary failure and obviating the final defeat. We are saved in the last analysis by faith and hope.

Genuine religion is based on experience. It is autonomous and is not derivative. This is plain to us from a study of corporate and collective religious experiences of the various mystics. The spirit in man has to be evoked. It is the correlate of the 'central peace subsisting at the heart of endless agitation.' Religious experience is different from imagination in that it has a *bona fide* Reality as its object. Religious experience is a primary, unique, and self-contained experience. It is an experience *sui generis*.

It is again an error to conceive that the man of religious experience is not cast for an active role in life. No true religion asks us to acquiesce mildly in the existing state of things; it is a challenge to reconstruct society on the basis of love and sympathy. Religion exhorts us not to become mental voluptuaries at the mercy of chance, desires, and undisciplined impulses. The Kingdom of Heaven conceived by the genuine religionist is not a mystical realm entirely unconnected with human relationship. It is a call

³ Jānāmi dharmam, na ca sampravrittih
Jānāmyadharmam na ca me nivrittih

to establish a just and a happy social order. From this it is evident that religion is not a convenient shirking of social responsibilities. Hence, the present chaos is not due to religion but

want of a proper religion. The great contribution of religion is its defence of individuality as a spiritual entity. It is essentially democratic and never on the side of reaction.

SWAMI NIRANJANANANDA

BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

Swami Niranjanananda was one of those few disciples whom Sri Ramakrishna termed as Nitya Siddhas or Ishwarkotis—that is, souls who are perfect from their very birth and are not caught by Maya at any time. With particular reference to Niranjanananda the Master once said that he was born with the characteristics of Rama inherent in him.

The early name of Swami Niranjanananda was Nityaniranjana Sen and was usually called by the shortened form of Niranjan. He came from a village in Twenty-four Parganas, but lived in Calcutta with his maternal uncle Kalikrishna Mitra. In his boyhood he became associated with a group of spiritualists in Calcutta. He was very often selected as a medium, and a very successful medium he always proved himself to be. At this time he developed some psychic powers—e.g. powers of curing people in a miraculous way and so on. It is said that a very rich man was suffering from insomnia for long eighteen years and sought the help of Niranjan for recovery. Niranjan said afterwards: 'I do not know whether that man got any real help from me. But finding the man suffering so much in life in spite of all his riches and wealth, I was seized with a feeling of the emptiness of all worldly things.'

Hearing about the great spiritual

power of Sri Ramakrishna, Niranjan one afternoon came to Dakshineswar to see him. Some say that Niranjan came to Sri Ramakrishna first with his spiritualist friends. It is said that they tried to make Sri Ramakrishna a medium. At first Sri Ramakrishna agreed and sat like an innocent child to be a medium. But soon he disliked the idea and left the seat.

Niranjan was about eighteen years old when he met Sri Ramakrishna for the first time. He had a very majestic appearance—being a tall figure with broad shoulders and a strong physique. Though a boy, fearlessness beamed through his eyes.

Sri Ramakrishna was surrounded by a circle of devotees when Niranjan came to him. In the evening when all the devotees dispersed, Sri Ramakrishna turned to Niranjan and inquired all about him. Coming to know about his interest in spiritualism, Sri Ramakrishna told young Niranjan; 'My boy, if you think of ghosts and spooks, ghosts and spooks you will become. And if you think of God, divine will be your life. Which do you prefer?' 'Of course the latter,' replied Niranjan. Thereupon Sri Ramakrishna advised Niranjan to sever all connections with the spiritualists, to which Niranjan agreed.

At the very first meeting Sri Ramakrishna talked with Niranjan in a way

as if he knew him for a long time. Seeing it was getting dark he pressed Niranjan to pass the night at Dakshineswar. But Niranjan could not do that lest his uncle should be anxious for him. He however promised to come again.

This meeting, though short, so much impressed Niranjan that the whole time on the way back to home he was thinking about Sri Ramakrishna. At home also Sri Ramakrishna occupied all his thoughts. So within two or three days he again came to Sri Ramakrishna. As soon as Sri Ramakrishna saw the boy near the door, he just ran to him and warmly embraced him. Then with deep feelings he began to say: 'My boy, days are passing, when will you realize God? And if you do not realize God, the whole life will be meaningless. I am greatly anxious as to when you will wholeheartedly devote yourself to God.' The boy Niranjan was mute with wonder and thought: 'Strange indeed. How could he be so anxious because I have not realized God! Who could this man be?' Anyway these words, uttered with deep feelings, greatly touched the heart of the boy. He spent the night at Dakshineswar. The next day and the day following that also were spent with Sri Ramakrishna in ecstatic joy. It was on the fourth day that he returned to Calcutta. His uncle was in great anxiety for him. When Niranjan returned home, he was scolded for his absence and put under surveillance so that he might not go anywhere. Afterwards, however, Niranjan was permitted to go to Dakshineswar whenever he liked.

Niranjan was very frank, and open-minded. The Master liked this trait in him because frankness and openmindedness, in his opinion, were rare virtues—the effect of much Tapasya in one's

previous life and they indicated one's possibility to realize God. Niranjan had great abhorrence for married life. When his relatives pressed him for marriage, he was alarmed at the very idea. He thought he was being dragged towards his ruin. He was an extremely pure soul. The Master used to say that Niranjan was without any 'Anjan'—i.e. without any blemish in his character.

Niranjan was of violent temper, though he had a very tender heart. When provoked, he would lose all sense of proportion. One day he was going to Dakshineswar in a country-boat. Some fellow passengers began to speak ill of Sri Ramakrishna in the hearing of Niranjan. Niranjan at first protested. But finding that it was of no avail, he began to rock the boat, threatening to drown the passengers for their misconduct. The robust appearance and the furious mood of Niranjan struck terror into the heart of the calumniators, who immediately apologized for their improper behaviour. When Sri Ramakrishna heard of this incident, he severely took Niranjan to task for his violent temper. 'Anger is a deadly sin, why should you be subject to it? Foolish people in their pitiable ignorance say many things. One should completely ignore them as beneath notice,' said Sri Ramakrishna.

At one time Niranjan was compelled to accept a situation in an office. When the news reached Sri Ramakrishna, he was greatly aggrieved and remarked, 'I would not have been more pained had I heard of his death.' Afterwards when he learned that Niranjan had accepted the situation to maintain his aged mother, Sri Ramakrishna breathed a sigh of relief and said: 'Ah, then it is all right. It will not contaminate your mind. But you had done so for your own sake,

I could not have touched you. Really it was unthinkable that you could stoop to such humiliation.' Hearing these words, when one from the audience asked Sri Ramakrishna if he was degrading service and if so, how could one maintain oneself and one's family, Sri Ramakrishna remarked, 'Let others do whatever they like. I say these with reference to those young aspirants who form a class by themselves.'

Niranjan could not be long in the service. When Sri Ramakrishna was ill at Cossipore, Niranjan was one of those young disciples who stayed with him and day and night attended to the needs of the Master, with the hope they would be able to cure him with their devoted service.

After the passing of Sri Ramakrishna, Niranjan joined the monastery at Baranagore and put himself heart and soul to the realization of Truth. Now and then spurred by the spirit of freedom which does not allow a monk to confine himself to one place, Niranjan also would go hither and thither, but the monastery at Baranagore and afterwards at Alambazar, when it was removed there, was, as it were, the headquarters for him as well as for all his Gurubhais.

He was the peer of Shashi (Swami Ramakrishnananda) in extraordinary steadfastness to the worship of the relic of the Master enshrined in the monastery. His faith in Sri Ramakrishna was so very living that it made him strong enough not to care a fig for the praise or blame of the whole world.

After his triumphant success in the West when Swami Vivekananda was returning to India, Swami Niranjanananda hastened to Colombo to receive him there.

Afterwards Niranjanananda accompanied Swami Vivekananda to some places in his tour through Northern

India. For some time he stayed in Benares performing Tapasya and living on Madhukari Bhiksha.

During the last few years of his life he suffered greatly from dysentery, and passed away in May, 1904, from an attack of cholera at Hardwar where he had gone for a change of climate.

Swami Niranjanananda had a very loving heart, though his appearance would inspire awe. His last meeting with the Holy Mother was very touching. 'It disclosed his loving, impulsive nature. He made no mention of the approaching end, but was like a tearful child clinging to its mother. He insisted that the Holy Mother do everything for him, even feed him, and he wanted only what she had made ready for his meal. When the time came for him to leave her, reluctantly he threw himself at her feet, weeping tears of tender sadness; then silently he went away, knowing that he would never see her again.'

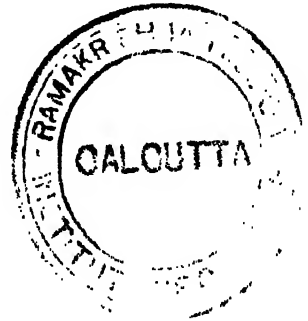
Indeed his devotion to the Holy Mother was unsurpassable. Swami Vivekananda used to say, 'Niranjan has got so much devotion to the Holy Mother that I can forgive his thousand and one faults only because of that.'

There was a strange mixture of tenderness and sternness in him. His love for truth was uncompromising and counted no cost. Once a gentleman of Calcutta built a Shiva temple in the city of Benares. When Swami Vivekananda heard of this he remarked, 'If he does something for relieving the sufferings of the poor, he will acquire the merit of building a thousand such temples.' When this remark of the great Swami reached the ears of the gentleman he came forward with a big offer of pecuniary help to the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service at Benares—then in a nucleus state. But afterwards as the first impulse of enthusiasm cooled down, he wanted to curtail the sum which he

originally offered. This breach of promise so much offended Swami Niranjanananda's sense of regard for truth that he rejected the offer altogether though that meant a great difficulty to the institution.

It is very difficult to estimate a spiritual personality by external events. The height of spiritual eminence of a person can be perceived, and that also only to some extent, by the inspiration

he radiates. Swami Niranjanananda left the stamp of his life on many persons. Some even renounced everything for the sake of God and joined the Ramakrishna Order because of his influence. He left one Sannyasin disciple. Above all to know Swami Niranjanananda, we must turn to what the Master said about him. Swami Niranjanananda was one of his 'Antarangas,' i.e. belonged to the inner circle of devotees.



It is in love that religion exists and not in ceremony; in the pure and sincere love in the heart. Unless a man is pure in body and mind, his coming into a temple and worshipping Shiva is useless. The prayers of those that are pure in mind and body will be answered by Shiva, and those that are impure, and yet try to teach religion to others, will fail in the end. External worship is only a symbol of internal worship; but internal worship and purity are the real things. Without them, external worship would be of no avail. . . . This is the gist of all worship—to be pure and to do good to others. He who sees Shiva in the poor, in the weak, and in the diseased, really worships Shiva; and if he sees Shiva only in the image, his worship is but preliminary. He who has served and helped one poor man seeing Shiva in him, without thinking of his caste, or creed, or race, or anything, with him Shiva is more pleased than with the man who sees Him only in temples.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

THE RECLUSE

Lonely I dwell and serene in caves of mountains Himalayan
Where majestic and stern, bold high-tow'ring peaks touch the sky;
Mystic and deep is the voice and vibrant with immortal accents
That speaks its sermon in stone, when lo the Worldheart reveals
To me, as in silence I gaze, Its mighty fountains of grandeur
Sounding Its echo afar, over the lifewave of space.
Solemn and mystic they stand, those columns, defying the ages,
Grandeur incarnate. Hark! hear ye the voice of the Rock,
When its mighty heart beats, while earth heaves with trembling vibrations,
Pulse that throbs back—through earth's veins—rhythm of planets in space,
Solemn and mute I converse with winds come from regions of Venus,
Whisp'ring their tale as they go onto the regions of Mars,
With clouds that were born where the sea sighs o'r islands of coral,
Where the bright jellyfish play dreamy in hot summereves,
Here do all forces unite like fathomless Ocean around me,
'Neath which the junglebeast lies, tamed and subdued like a child,
In still midnightly hours, lone on this high dome of Creation,
See I the Godhead unveiled and with the Spirit commune,
Flick'ring beneath me I see the quick-tossing ship of existence
Thrown like a wreck on those shores, sandbanks that make time and space
Suns, planets and moons I see rise in Cycle's smooth running courses
In Samsara's round wheel, the limited circle of thought,
Though endless may seem its expanse to minds of thought-ridden Vision
Who find their boundary line within their own narrow spheres,
Where life-force still slowly evolves, passing through stone, plant and creature
Struggling and striving for light, without yet knowing its goal,
Then o'r vast space I send forth in pity my force to all beings
That by a ray from my heart, light fall to them in their gloom,
'Stop, feeble seekers, be still; you're chased by the ghosts of illusion,
Ghosts that have sprung from your mind. *Think you are free and you are.*
Know that there is but one Life, one limitless Essence eternal,
Unto this Silence return, the infinite, glorious *One*.
Ah for that state of the heart, beyond all desire, mind-created,
Oh, for that limitless Sea, where Truth and Unity dwell!
Thought shackles stripped, at my feet the chains of illusion lie broken,
Free thus at last is my soul, free from the chains of desire,
One with the planets and suns, one too with the eternal Silence,
Thus does my being expand past all the regions of space.

—CHRISTINA ALBERS

NOTES AND COMMENTS

'WHO IS SHIVA?'

The Ven. Pandit W. Sorata Thera is the Vice-Principal of the Vidyodaya Privena, Colombo. He raises the above question in the April Number of the *Mahabodhi* Journal of Calcutta and proceeds to answer it. We are pained to note that his whole thesis is vitiated by a certain amount of unwarrantable colour-prejudice.

The writer speaks of his 'white' Aryan forefathers and says that they, the conquerors of India, 'being in the minority, took every possible means of pleasing the conquered so that they might maintain their power over the aborigines of the land.' He enlightens us further, when he says, 'Still these people (the aborigines) were so strong and powerful that the Aryans were forced to adopt some of their primitive gods and habits. But though they accepted the gods of the aborigines as Vedic gods, they respected them less.'

We must say that it ill becomes 'a descendant of the Aryans' to blacken their character by ascribing to them duplicity in statecraft such as is practised by a modern Machiavelli.

In the latter portions of his thesis the Ven. Pandit says that Shiva, the god 'of the primitive black people of India' and 'of the South Indian Dravidians' and of the 'black people' known as 'Yakshas and Rakshasas,' does in his learned opinion stand in the same rank as 'the primitive gods of Australia.'

Here, the Ven. Pandit is evidently labouring under several misconceptions. The primitive people of Australia were distant cousins of the Vaddahs who can claim relationship by affinity with the

aristocracy of Ceylon. As for the Rakshasas, Mr. Munidasa Kumaranatunga who has done some research into this matter holds ('Vide the *Ceylon Observer* April 17, 1941) that the nation to which he belongs has descended from the Rakshasas. According to the Ramayana, Ravana, the king of the Rakshasas lived in a resplendent city and was well-versed in the four Vedas. He was a devotee of Shiva. Kubera, the king of the Yakshas, the multi-millionaire of ancient legends, was a friend of the great God. The capital of the Yaksha king lay to the north of Mount Kailas, the earthly abode of Shiva. The Yakshas were in all probability the progenitors of the Mongolian race. The pigment of the skin of well-born Yakshas must have been golden yellow and not black. There is evidence of Mongolian penetration into Nepal, Bengal, and Burma and far south into Malaya, Sumatra, and possibly Ceylon. Kuveni, the Yaksha princess, the charmer of Vijaya, might have had the good looks of a modern Balinese maiden of high caste. The ancient Yakkhas (Yakshas) who held the island at the time of the coming of Vijaya could not have been exterminated. It is safer to assume that they got absorbed into and became one with the new arrivals. Vijaya was also a worshipper of Shiva. 'The primitive black people of India' i.e. the Kolarians were not identical with the Dravidians. For the present, setting the Kolarians and the Dravidians aside, we ask the Ven. Pandit, are not the other races mentioned by him well-connected and, consequently, is not the Deity worshipped by them worthy of consideration?

The excavations at Mohen-jo-Daro and Harappa have revealed the fact that the people who lived in these ancient cities, five to seven thousand years ago, were highly civilized and were worshippers of Shiva. These people have been identified with the Dravidians. Scholars hold that ancient Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Sumerians belonged to the Dravidian race ethnically. Philologists say that the Brahuīs, the Basques, the Magyars, and certain other Mediterranean races speak languages connected with Dravidian speech. None would deny the high state of civilization attained by ancient Egyptians. They worshipped Shiva and Uma under the names of Osiris and Isis. This point as well as information regarding the sacred bull, the symbolism of the leopard skin garment etc. are to be found in the elaborate researches of Dr. Abinās Chandra Das (of the Calcutta University), embodied in his two books : *Rig-Vedic India* and *Rig-Vedic Culture*.

As for the Aryan colonization of South India and Ceylon, we might do well to sift the available traditional evidence before accepting any portion of it as final. Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar in his *Asoka* has clearly shown the unreliability of the ancient chronicles of Ceylon as sources of history. Dr. G. C. Mendis in his *Early History of Ceylon* says : 'In recent times there has been a tendency on the part of some to reject most of the events related about Vijaya and Pandukabhaya as mythical, and accept as correct the *Mahavamsa* story in the main from the time of Devanampiya Tissa.' He himself does it. The tradition relating to Vijaya says that the exiled prince and his 699 companions sailing from Bengal or Western India, (scholars are not decided on the point) reached Ceylon and took possession of the island with the help of

Kuveṇi, the Yakkha princess whom Vijaya married and later divorced. Vijaya then sought for and obtained the hand of a Tamil princess and his companions also married Tamil maidens.

Dr. Mendis in his book afore-mentioned says : 'It is difficult to gauge the extent of Tamil blood among the Sinhalese, but there is no doubt that it is considerable. Otherwise it is difficult to explain why the Sinhalese language, not only in its vocabulary but also in its structure, shows the influence of Tamil so strongly, and why the Sinhalese caste-system is so similar to the caste-system of South India.'

We have said enough to show that the Tamil Hindus and Sinhalese Buddhists of Ceylon sink or swim together. The sylvan shrine of Kartikeya in the south of Ceylon has been for centuries past the common meeting ground of the two great communities. All right-thinking persons would hold that it should continue to be so and thereby strengthen the fraternal ties that already exist. What is the good of attempting to sow discord by making endeavours to prove that Kartikeya's father belongs to the non-Aryan clan and is not worth much consideration. The Aryans have accepted Shiva as Maha-Deva, the great God ; they certainly had good reason to do so. That ought to put an end to the whole controversy. As a student of Sanskrit, the Ven. Pandit would do well to peruse the Mahabharata and see what place it assigns to Shiva. The great epic standing between the Vedic and Pauranic ages is the best authority for those who want to know that Rudra-Shiva of the Vedas and Upanishads is Shiva Mahadeva of later Hinduism.

Ever since European scholars began studying Sanskrit and making investigations into the science of language a good deal of sense and nonsense has

been written about Aryans and Dravidians and Aryan gods and Dravidian gods. We have no quarrel with the philologists but when their conclusions are misapplied to discover ethnological differences where none exist and to sow discord where harmony reigns, we feel it our duty to cry 'halt.' Neither the Anglo-Saxons nor the Teutons have shown any anxiety to embrace the 'Aryans' of India and Ceylon as their brothers. We are all 'untouchables' in Canada, Australia and South Africa.

Ourselves as well as the Ven. Pandit will be refused the citizenship of the United States of America on the ground of being non-Aryans. The German Fuhrer is not going to admit us into the confraternity either.

To put it frankly, we are all niggers. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines the word as 'member of any dark-skinned race, e.g. East-Indian, native Australian.' Brown slaves undoubtedly make themselves ridiculous by endeavouring to claim kinship with their white masters at the expense of their own black brothers.

In another sense we are all Aryans. Buddhism inherits the same culture as Hinduism; both are Aryan paths—the word 'Aryan' being used in its etymological sense meaning 'noble.' The Aryanization of South India and Ceylon began at the time of Emperor Ashoka (278-232 B.C.), was carried on vigorously under the Imperial Guptas (A.D. 300-500) and later on under the

Pallavas—the whole period covering about a thousand years. When the ancient Chola and Pandya dynasties were resuscitated in the seventh century A.D. the kings bore Aryan names and even the names of places were changed. Again under the Chola Empire of which Ceylon was a province for some time, the process was continued and renaissance Hinduism and Buddhism lived side by side not only in South India and Ceylon but beyond the seas in Malaya, Sumatra, Indo-China, and other places. Wherever the Cholas held suzerainty they built temples to Shiva and Buddha and made grants to both. The process of Aryanization was so complete that Dravidian languages lost their individuality and for all practical purposes were Sanskritic. During the last fifty years the discovery and publication of a large body of ancient Tamil literature has made the Tamils realize that in the pre-Christian ages there was a distinct Dravidian culture in their country. Politicians made capital use of this fact and attempted to dispossess the Tamil Brahmins of their true inheritance by calling them Aryans and retaining the name Dravidians for themselves. *Mutatis mutandis* something similar appears to be working in Ceylon also. As monks, is it not our duty to put an end to these religious controversies, be true to the precepts of our great teachers, and endeavour to recognize the harmony that exists between Buddhism and Hinduism?

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE COLLECTED POEMS OF JAMES H. COUSINS. *Published by the Kalākshetra, Adyar, Madras, India. Pp. xviii+472. Price Rs. 3-8 As. plus 8 As. postage. Edition de Luxe Rs. 10 plus postage.*

In the latter part of the nineteenth century a ferment arose in the West when the Swan of the East thought it fit gently to stir her waters. Men and women of intellect and imagination, weary of the post-Darwinian mundanities of that time, sought refuge in a variety of pursuits, spiritual and pseudo-spiritual: rosicrucianism, hypnotism, spiritualism, Christian Science, Egyptian Exploration—they all found their votaries. Then the Swan shed a feather of her own right wing. Vivekananda went out to the West, and before him, as forerunner, Ram Mohan Roy.

The West was stirred; but more especially Ireland, kindred with India in several ways. The Celtic mind, with its proneness to the white rose of the occult, and the Indian intellect, aye-ready-dry for spiritual kindling, are near-akin. And so it is small wonder that the Ireland of those days brought forth three souls pre-eminent in the field of thought and imagination: the first, W. B. Yeats, lover of the lightning flash, who, throughout a career of prolonged devotion to the Muse, never failed to keep an eye aloft for lightning flashes from Indian skies; the next, the philosopher-poet Æ, serene and persistent student of Shankara and Patanjali; and the third, more fervid than the others, who, not content with the vision from afar, (*vox: visio*), came hither in person so that with his own eyes he may see and with his own hands caress, James Cousins.

Dr. Cousins' contact with Mother India goes back to 42 years. During these years he has roamed her highways and her broadways: his eyes have ranged from Kalimpong to Colombo. Wherever he has gone, the Muses' lyre has lain tucked away in his rucksack; and the result—this 500-pages volume of poems: 'the expression of forty years of poetical aspiration.' Indeed, India may now claim him for her own, and when he sings to Eire—

For, though thy sorrows may not cease,
Though, blessing thou art still unblest,

Thou hast for men a gift of peace
O daughter of divine unrest!
his words have a relevance nearer home.

This then, we hold, is Dr. Cousins' special significance and the justification for yet another volume of verse in this war-drenched generation of ours. Here is proof that in the twin chambers of the same man's heart East and West may dwell in unity.

The reader will not find in these writings that quality of red-hot eagerness which is the very core and essence of poetry—'the whole man, blood, intellect and imagination running together'—such as Yeats, among the moderns, longed for and reached:

Myself I must remake
Till I am Timon and Lear
Or that William Blake
Who beat upon the wall
Till truth obeyed his call;

and Thomas Hardy, cross-examiner of the President of the Immortals, who brooded with a smouldering passion over the mysteries of existence:

If, when hearing that I have been stilled
at last, they stand at the door,
Watching the full-starred heavens that
winter sees,
Will this thought rise on those who will meet
my face no more,
'He was one who had an eye for such
mysteries?'

No, verse of this calibre is not to be found in these pages. Here, instead, are the cogitations of a gentle sage with a benign face who has moved up and down the length and breadth of our land (with occasional excursions to Japan and to America) always taking that portable Muses' lyre with him. Gladiolus in an oriental garden; sunrise on Kinchinjunga; spring in Kashmir; and again gladiolus in an occidental garden—on these, among others, his fancy has roamed; not, however, without a constant homesickness for that beloved land of lure, his own. Being an Irishman and a poet how else could it have been? The fruits are here but the root was there. He sings—
God willed of old to lift thine ancient Name,
That thou, through suffering made most wise,
most pure,

Shouldst bear before all men the Soul's
 white lure,
 And lead them through the purifying flame.
 Mother of mighty dreams! let joy be thine:
 Thou still hast beauty for the beautiful,
 And proud, glad lovers for thy loveliness.
 How true of India too!

East and West—West and East—juxtaposed and juxtaposed—he the manly scion of the Father—she maidenly beloved of the Mother—he advances with ships and guns—she is unmoved—he stands taut and haughty—she advances, the Swan in hand—and so, to and fro, back and forth, until in Destiny's good time *irae* shall yield place to *nuptiae*. Let Dr. Cousins himself foretell that glad time—

Come from behind those eyes that I may see
 Thyself, beloved! not lip or hand or brain.
 These are not thou! These are the servile
 train

That crowd me from thine inmost mystery.
 Show me thy naked soul!—or it may be
 That, lacking this, I shall, in love's mad
 strain,

Shatter the form, and sift it grain by grain
 To find thine utter self, thee, very thee!

BENGALI

VEDANTA SOPAN O ADVAITAVAD.
 BY NYAYAVAGISH P. C. SINHA RAY. *Published by the author from P. 205, Lansdown Road Extension, Calcutta. Pp. 74. Price 8 As.*

The book is a comparative study of the various schools of Vedanta along with the dualistic and non-dualistic views of Western philosophy. In this short treatise the author has shown a very clear and comprehensive grasp of the different systems of thought, Eastern and Western, and expressed them in a manner and style so lucid and simple that it acquaints the reader with the vast storehouse of Indian Philosophy and the systematic way of reaching some of the startling conclusions. His method is thought provoking. If Vedanta is the grandest attempt at synthesizing the different aspects of truth found in ancient India, the author has shown his catholicity by

dealing with every system with perfect sympathy and appreciation. He believes that all possible relations in which the individual soul stands to God, are true, that the spiritual units beyond time and space, are strangely related to one another, that they are one and at the same time not one, that one unit may be united with the other without losing its individuality. So the personal view of the author is inclined towards Dvaitadvaita (dualistic monism) which he considers to be the key-point of Vedanta. The exclusive claim of any one system to truth is misleading. Truth can be attained, not by intellect alone, but by a full life, free and unbiased. We recommend the book to the public.

DARSHAN SOPAN. BY NYAYAVAGISH P. C. SINHA RAY. *Published by Dharmabrata Sinha Ray. Pp. 211. Price paper-bound Re. 1-4 As., cloth-bound Re. 1-8 As.*

This book is an introduction to the study of general philosophy and meets the requirements of the syllabus for the B.A. degree. In Bengali it is the first of its kind just like the author's Tarka Vijnan, a treatise on Intermediate Logic. Both these books are pioneer works in Bengali language for which Mr. Sinha Ray deserves congratulations. Darshan Sopan has been written in a simple and lucid style. Being a logician the author has put his ideas in clear-cut concepts and consistent trains of reasoning; so the work has been free from the mist that generally surrounds an abstract and abstruse subject. It is a credit that he could refer to so many topics making a comparative study, whenever necessary, of the Eastern and Western philosophers in such a brief space. The future authors on this line may use with advantage most of the terminologies coined by the author.

This book will be quite useful to the students of philosophy and the general public.

What we feel is that the standpoint of Indian Philosophy is quite different from that of Western Philosophy. This spirit should be maintained in making comparative studies.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIDYAPITH, DEOGHAR (S. P.), BEHAR

The Vidyapith is a residential High School conducted on a combined basis of the old Gurukula system and the modern methods of education. A short summary of its report for the year 1940 is given below.

The enrolment stood at 148 at the end of the year. There were 18 teachers on the staff, 12 of whom were graduates. Of the 11 boys sent up for the Matriculation Examination, 9 came out successful.

A special feature of the Vidyapith is its high standard of physical instruction. Various kinds of games, drills, and free-hand exercises are encouraged. Boys were taken on several excursions during the year. These were so organized as to combine pleasure with education. The observance of various religious festivals and daily prayer, both in the morning and evening, provides the students with facilities for moral and religious training. The boys have two organizations called 'Courts' through which they control all their activities outside school

hours. A Literary Society and two Manuscript Magazines are conducted by the boys.

The Library and the Reading Room of the Vidyapith contained at the end of the year 3,900 books and 24 periodicals respectively. The Medical Department, meant mainly for the resident students, treated 1,797 general and 108 surgical cases from outside. The Dairy and the Kitchen Garden supplied the inmates with fresh milk and vegetables. Students were offered opportunities of taking part in the work of the Flower Garden. The Vidyapith has a Publication Department which has brought out two books. A plot of land measuring about seven acres was acquired during the year. This will be utilized for Handicraft Sections of the Vidyapith.

Present Needs : (1) Rs. 25,000/- for a Prayer Hall. (2) Rs. 5,000/- for Water Supply. (3) Rs. 3,000/- for a Cow-shed. (4) Funds for the Vocational Section. (5) Rs. 1,000/- for roofing the Gymnasium.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, SINGAPORE

The activities of the Ramakrishna Mission, Singapore, for the year 1940, may be brought under the following heads:

Religious : Regular religious classes and lectures in English and Tamil were conducted on every Sunday and Friday respectively. The monastic members of the Centre went out on lecturing tours to many places during the year. The birthdays of the great Saviours of the world were observed with due solemnity.

Educational : The Mission conducts two Tamil Schools separately for boys and girls. The enrolment in each School was 132 during the year. Tamil is taught up to the seventh standard. Of the 5 students sent up from the Boys' School for the All-Malayan Government Examination, 4 passed securing the first, second, eleventh and fourteenth places. In both the Schools poor students were given free tuition and supplied with books and other requisites. Basket-weaving, fret-work, spinning, and carpentry were taught to the boys, while sewing and cooking formed

parts of the curriculum for the Girls' School. A religious class for the boys was conducted on every Saturday. Facilities for games and physical exercise were provided to pupils of both the Schools. In each School an afternoon session was held for students who attended English Schools elsewhere.

There are two other English Schools separately for boys and girls, where classes were held in the afternoon. They had 98 and 96 students respectively on their rolls. A School for adults, in which two Tamil and two English classes were held, was conducted at night. As a nucleus of a Students' Home 5 poor students were accommodated in the Mission premises and supplied with all their requirements. The Mission maintains a Library and a Reading Room which are open to the public. The Young Men's Cultural Union, started with the object of promoting cultural understanding amongst all youths irrespective of nationality, did good work during the year.

A Branch Centre was opened at Penang in April, 1940. Since then it has been running a Gujrathi School for boys and girls. It also maintains a Library and a Reading

Room for the public and holds religious classes and prayer meetings periodically.

The Mission appeals for funds for the upkeep and further expansion of its benevolent activities.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION TUBERCULOSIS CLINIC, DELHI

An Appeal

The public are aware that for the last eight years the Ramakrishna Mission has been conducting a Tuberculosis Clinic and Dispensary for the poor with the help of charitably disposed persons and grants-in-aid from the two Municipalities of Delhi and New Delhi. The attendance of patients has been increasing all this time, the total exceeding 17,000 last year. Her Excellency the Marchioness of Linlithgow who visited the Clinic in 1937 was much impressed with its work and expressed her earnest wish that money would be forthcoming for the expansion of the institution. Distinguished persons like the Honourable Sir Maurice Gwyer, Chief Justice of the Federal Court ; Sir N. N. Sircar ; the present Chief Commissioner of Delhi and his predecessor ; Major General E. W. C. Bradfield, lately Director-General of Indian Medical Service ; the Chief Medical Officers and Chief Health Officers of this Province, and others have also visited the Clinic from time to time and spoken highly of the service rendered by it to the needy public.

It is well known how tuberculosis is producing havoc in this country, especially among the poorer classes. In the West, excellent arrangements exist for the prevention and treatment of tubercular diseases which it is difficult for a country like India even to imagine. A Clinic is, therefore, practically the chief weapon left to this country to fight this terrible scourge.

The administration of the Ramakrishna Mission T. B. Clinic is supervised by an efficient Working Committee composed of the Chief Medical Officer, Delhi Province, the Chief Health Officer, Delhi Province, the Medical Officer of Health, and two representatives of the Delhi Municipality, besides five nominees of the Local Committee of the

Mission. It is run in co-ordination with the two Clinics of Delhi, viz. the New Delhi T. B. Clinic, and the Delhi Municipal T. B. Clinic, and is closely associated with the Delhi Provincial Tuberculosis Association.

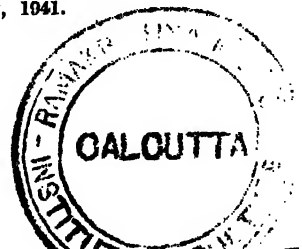
The Clinic is at present located in a rented house at Daryaganj which, however, is not quite suited to its growing needs, and, moreover, the rent is very exorbitant. It has, therefore, been decided to shift the Clinic to a house of its own in the Western Extension Area where the Government have lately allotted two separate plots of land for building the Clinic and its staff quarters. The cost of the proposed buildings is estimated, at the prevailing market conditions, at Rs. 25,000/- and Rs. 5,000/- respectively.

Faced with the difficulty of finding funds for constructing the buildings, the Management appeals with all the emphasis at its command to one and all who feel for the poor and suffering humanity to come forward with liberal contributions and assist the institution in the badly needed and humanitarian work which it is doing for the victims of tuberculosis. Those desirous of perpetuating the memory of their beloved ones will find in this noble work a suitable medium for such commemoration by means of handsome donations made in the names of their dear departed which the Management will arrange to have inscribed in marble tablets.

Contributions, however small, will be thankfully acknowledged by the undersigned.

SWAMI KAILASHANANDA,
Secretary.

Ramakrishna Mission,
New Delhi,
The 26th May, 1941.



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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

YEARNING AND GOD-REALIZATION

Sri Ramakrishna: ‘God cannot be realized unless the heart yearns for Him. And this yearning does not come until the desire for enjoyment has been satisfied. Those who are attached to lust and gold and whose desires for enjoyment are still unsatisfied, cannot have this yearning.

‘In that country (Kamarpukur) the son of Hriday used to spend the whole day with me. He was only four or five years old. He used to play before me with various things and forget everything else. But no sooner did evening approach than he would say, “I shall go to mammy.” In so many ways I would try to pacify him saying, “I shall give you pigeons and dolls,” but he would not be consoled. He would cry and say, “I shall go to mammy.” Play had no longer any attraction for him. I used to see his plight and shed tears.

‘One should weep for God like a child ! One should have this yearning ! Nothing in the world—play or food—

can then offer any attraction for him. This state of yearning comes when the desires for enjoyment have been satisfied.’

In speechless wonder do all listen to these words.

It is evening. A servant comes and lights the lamp. Keshab and the other Brahmo devotees will take some refreshments before they leave. The arrangements for this are being made.

Keshab (with a smile): ‘Is it puffed rice that we are to take to-day also?’

Sri Ramakrishna (with a smile): ‘Hriday knows.’

Leaves have been arranged to serve as plates. Puffed rice is served first, and then Luchi and curry. (All rejoice and laugh). It is 10 p.m. and everything is over. The Master is again talking to the Brahmo devotees at the foot of the Panchavati.

Sri Ramakrishna (with a smile, to *Keshab*): ‘After God-realization one can live happily in the world. In the play of hide-and-seek, the player who has succeeded in touching the

"Granny" is free. Even so can you move after the realization of God.

'A devotee who has attained the vision of God, becomes free from all attachment. He may be likened to a mud-fish which, though living in the mud, is never soiled by it.'

It is about 11 p.m. All are impatient to leave. Pratap says, 'Let us spend the night here.' Sri Ramakrishna invites Keshab to stay there for the night.

Keshab (with a smile): 'We shall have to go. There is much work to be done.'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'Why, don't you get sleep unless there is the smell of the fish-baskets! One evening a fisherwoman was a guest at the house of a florist. She was asked to sleep in a room where flowers were kept; but she was getting no sleep. (All laugh). She became restless. Perceiving her condition the wife of the florist came and inquired, "Well, what is the matter? Why are you not sleeping?" The fisherwoman replied, "Yes, mother, the unpleasant smell of the flowers seems to disturb my sleep. Can you get my fish-basket here?" The fisherwoman then sprinkled some water on the empty basket and, the smell from that entering her nose, she fell fast asleep.' (All laugh).

At the time of departure Keshab takes with him a bouquet that was offered at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna. He bows down to the Master and exclaims with the other devotees, 'Glory be to Nava Vidhan (the New Dispensation).'

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AT THE HOUSE OF SURENDRA

It is a day in the Bengali month of Ashad. The English year is 1881. Sri Ramakrishna has come to-day to the house of Surendra. There are some devotees with him. It is almost evening. Before coming here, the Master

was taking rest in the afternoon at the house of Manomohan.

The devotees have assembled in the parlour room of Surendra's house. It is situated on the first floor. Mahendra Goswami, Bholanath Pal and others of the neighbourhood are present. Srijut Keshab Sen was to come, but he could not. Srijut Trailokya Sannyal of the Brahmo Samaj and some other Brahmo devotees have come.

There is a cotton fabric spread over the floor of the parlour, which again has been covered by a large sheet of linen. Over the linen there is a fine carpet with a bolster placed on it. Surendra leads the Master to the room and requests him to take his seat on the carpet. The Master refuses to do so and sits by the side of Mahendra Goswami. Sri Ramakrishna used to attend every day the *Pârâyanam*¹ that was held in the garden-house of Jadu Mallick. The *Parayanam* was held for several months.

Mahendra Goswami (to the devotees): 'I lived with him almost continually for several months. I have never seen a great man like him! His Realization, are not of the common order.'

Sri Ramakrishna (to the Goswami): 'Don't say like this. I am the lowest of the low, the poorest of the poor; I am the servant of His servants. Krishna alone is great.'

'The undifferentiated Sachchidananda (Brahman) and Lord Sri Krishna are one and the same. The water of the sea looks blue from a distance, but go near it and you will find that it has no colour. He who appears as qualified is again beyond all attributes. He is both the Absolute and the relative.'

'Why is it that Sri Krishna has three

¹ The complete reading of any Purana, such as the *Bhagavata*, with due rituals and ceremonies.

bends in His body? It is due to His extreme love for Radha.

'That which is Brahman is also called Kali, the Primal Energy, when It creates, sustains, and destroys. Krishna and Kali are identical. The ultimate Reality is one. All else is Its play or manifestation.

THE WAY TO GOD-REALIZATION

'He can be seen. One with a pure heart can see Him. The mind becomes impure by its attachment to lust and gold.

'Everything lies with the mind. It is like a white cloth fresh from the wash, and may be dyed in any colour you dip it in. Wisdom and ignorance are qualities of the mind. Such and such a man has gone astray means that his mind has been coloured by evil thoughts.'

Srijut Trailokya Sannyal and other Brahmo devotees come and take their seats now.

Surendra comes with a garland to put it round the neck of Sri Ramakrishna. The Master takes the garland in his hand, but throws it aside. With tears in his eyes, Surendra retires to the western verandah and sits there. Ram, Manomohan, and others follow him there. With wounded feelings, Surendra says, 'I am really angry. A Brahmin coming from the locality that he does, how can he know the value of these things! The garland has cost me a good amount. In a fit of anger I said, Let the garlands be put round others' necks. Now I realize my fault. God cannot be pleased with money. He is away from one under the grip of pride and vanity. I have got pride in

me and so, why should he accept my offerings! I have no desire to live.' As he speaks tears roll down his cheeks and flood his chest.

Inside the room, Trailokya is singing and the Master is dancing in a state of divine ecstasy. He takes up the garland thrown off before and wears it round his neck. With the garland in one hand and the other hand waving, he sings and dances.

Surendra is beside himself with joy at the sight that the Master is dancing with the garland round his neck. Thinks he within himself, 'The Lord is the destroyer of pride of the haughty, but is a friend of the poor and the lowly.'

The Master sings:

'Behold, the two brothers have come
who shed tears while uttering the
very word Hari (God);
They offer love even to those inimical;
They go into ecstasies over the name of
God and throw others into the
same;
They embrace one and all in love—even
a pariah;
They are the two brothers of Brindaban
born again.'

Many of the devotees are dancing with the Master. All have now resumed their seats and are conversing on various spiritual topics. The Master says to Surendra, 'Will you not give me anything to eat?' He gets up and goes to the inner apartment of the house. The ladies of the house come and bow down to him in great reverence. The Master takes some refreshments and after a little rest, leaves for Dakshineswar.

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND RELIGIOUS TOLERATION

Prophets have appeared in all climes and in all ages. Everyone of them held that he came to fulfil and not to destroy. They accepted the heritage that came down to them from the past and added their own quota to it. They also claimed a universality to their message. It was not to be confined to a single country or a single racial unit but was to be the possession of all mankind. Prophets were the exponents of spiritual truths. They were the mediators between heaven and earth. They justified the ways of God to man. In the early epochs of human civilization when mankind had not learned to differentiate between the various ways in which the human mind could approach the eternal problems of existence, the prophet, the poet and the philosopher were classed together. The mental and moral sciences were not differentiated from the objective sciences either. The wise man, the sage, was considered to be the repository of all wisdom. He was also the seer, who had the inner vision to discern things that lay outside the ken of the ordinary man. The highest truths were uttered in the rhythmic language of poetry. Poetry did not confine itself to the singing of earthly love and earthly beauty but rose high and sang of heavenly love and heavenly beauty. Heroes became demigods, and a passing episode which manifested the glory of a nation in war or peace was fashioned by the poets to something of permanent value to inspire the people ever after to noble deeds and high aspirations. Nations came to possess their Sagas, their Vedas, their sacred scriptures, in short their great national books which

contained records of their highest achievements in thought and action.

* * *

Ancient Hebrew, Greek and Sanskrit, Chinese and Arabic, as well as Egyptian and Assyrian and such other languages which have now become obsolete have been acclaimed as sacred languages by their votaries for they contained some of the noblest utterances of humanity. The Great Spirit continues to reveal Itself through living tongues and many noble thoughts have been uttered and are being uttered through the languages which humanity is using to-day, but 'distance lends enchantment to the view' and humanity reveres the past and fails to see the beauty that lies close at hand. All great poetry is pregnant with thought, no matter in what age or in what country the poet lived. The plays of George Bernard Shaw and Henrik Ibsen reveal to us the hidden springs of human action quite as effectively as the plays of Aeschylus and Euripides, Sophocles and Shakespeare, Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti. Modern science is indeed more inspiring than the speculations of ancient natural philosophers. We happen to possess a more intimate knowledge of our planet and of the heavenly bodies than was possessed by the astronomers and geographers of ancient times. Traversing backwards in time the moderns have unravelled the records of the past and have a fairly accurate knowledge of the rise and growth of nations and also of the forces that brought about their decay and dissolution. In spite of all these great advances in the knowledge of the external world and notwithstanding the fact that the lessons of the past lie un-

ravelled before them, the nations of the modern world have not solved their social problems in any way better than the ancients. Class hatreds, racial jealousies, the exploitation of the weak by the strong, religious animosities, and such other anti-social tendencies are as rampant to-day as they were centuries ago. Why have men failed to be drawn closer together? What is it that drives nations to commit acts of aggression against other nations? In short, why is civilization drifting backwards to savagery by bombing itself out of existence? At this critical period of the history of the human race, it might be profitable to give some thought to this matter.

* * *

What is the secret of that corporate life which would possess the potentiality to grow wider and wider until it embraces the whole of the human race? We have chairs in many universities to carry on investigations into problems bearing on human relationships. We have an army of specialists in the sciences relating to human life and human endeavour. There are the behaviourists, the gestalt psychologists, the psycho-analysts, the positivists, the humanists, the Darwinians, the Lamarekians and so forth. Our capacity for specialization has gone on endlessly in other directions also. Men of our age consider it worth while to give a whole life-time to the study of subjects such as the pigmentation on the wings of butterflies, the polychrome pottery of ancient Crete and so on. Our laws have developed to such an extent that in all countries, battalions of lawyers are ceaselessly engaged in fighting out cases and making fat incomes for themselves. Like the squirrel in the revolving cage the modern man has traversed far in the realms of knowledge, without getting

anywhere near the source of all knowledge. He even doubts the very existence of the source. Analysing endlessly he has seen the parts and has failed to see the whole. He has closely studied the phenomena of nature but the meaning behind the phenomena has escaped his attention. He often puts up a fight for the forms and empty conventions of religion but the spirit underlying the form has eluded his grasp. Poor deluded mortal! His greeds and ambitions are centred round the possessions and enjoyments of this world. He laughs at the saint or mystic who speaks of another, paying back the compliment by calling the man of religion, a vain chaser of shadows. Yet, the man of the world, whose valued possessions and enjoyments can only be secured in a harmonious corporate life here, in this world, has not found it possible to solve that all-important problem.

* * *

The modern man exhibits intellectual imbecility when he breaks into a bellicose mood and sings that blustering music-hall song ending with the refrain: 'We don't want to fight, but, by Jingo if we do.' He seldom realizes the fact that jingoism leads to mutual destruction. The daily paper announces the slaughter of one million Germans and a quarter of a million Russians. The man who reads his paper at the breakfast table gives no further thought to the matter. He may pass judgement on the million and a quarter of dead men by saying, 'It serves them right.' The present conflict in the West has clearly shown that it is not only nations that are at strife but also groups within the same nation. The Quislings were fully prepared to hand over their countries to the enemy. We have also seen friends becoming enemies and enemies becoming friends.

Surely we are a confused people living in an extremely chaotic world. Some of our elderly statesmen say that we have to re-establish a Christian civilization to make the human race settle down to peace and prosperity. There by, of course, they concede the fact that just at present the teachings of Christ have ceased to exert any tangible influence among the warring nations of the West. These statesmen probably think that Christianity will re-establish the old conditions and make the world safe for themselves and their children. 'Gentle Jesus meek and mild' is the nursery version of the personality of the founder of Christianity. The men who guided the Roman Empire in the early centuries of the Christian era knew what a powerful influence that personality wielded in overturning the established order, by raising the lowly and the oppressed and pushing down the privileged from their pedestals. Let us see briefly how that divine power worked for social justice and equality among men.

* * *

The early Christians lived a communistic life. They formed one family. The brotherhood of those who professed the faith was not a distant ideal but an immediate reality. The glorious example of the Master was before them. The new faith admitted the learned and the illiterate, the freeman and the slave, publicans and sinners as well as saints and anchorites, all on a footing of equality. They shared their worldly goods by handing over their possessions to the community and drawing from it their bare maintenance. Such an economic order brought about a social organization which recognized the equality of all the members. Every individual counted. Within the members who professed the faith, there were no class distinctions; neither was

there any racial prejudice. The Church sought no temporal power. Caesar's claims and God's claims were kept strictly separate. With the accumulation of wealth and the monopolizing of all learning, the Church found itself in conflict with the men who held temporal power. In some cases it compromised, elsewhere it set up a defiance. Schisms resulted and Christendom became divided. The Inquisition, the burning of the heretics at the stake, the persecution of the Roman Catholics by the Protestants and such other anti-social acts followed. Holy wars and Crusades were prompted by the hidden motive of uniting Christendom by turning it against the followers of another faith. Love gave place to hate. From being a universal religion, Christianity became transformed into a narrow dogmatism which subdivided itself into hundreds of warring creeds.

* * *

Religious intolerance in the past led to the setting up of religious oligarchies. The Pope of Christendom had the power to make and unmake kings. The breaking away of whole countries from the Church may be traced to the exercising of this power. In the present day, the only country in which supreme temporal power is combined with supreme spiritual power is Tibet, where the Dalai Lama is the sovereign ruler of the country and also the spiritual father of all his subjects. The supreme pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church holds suzerainty over the narrow confines of the Vatican State. The millions of men who are his spiritual children owe allegiance to the governments of their own countries. All modern democratic countries give freedom of conscience to all citizens. In doing so they guarantee communal harmony and social peace. No social unit can isolate itself from its neighbours. This

necessitates that the citizens of free democratic countries should learn to respect the religious faiths of their neighbours. The individual citizen has the right to practise his religion in his own way provided he does not wound the susceptibilities of his fellow citizens. Men who grow up in democratic traditions come to realize that justice which is implanted in all human hearts is a better basis for social life than narrow religious doctrines and dogmas. Citizens of a democratic State have closer ties than men who are engaged in a co-operative commercial enterprise. The latter can break off their connection at will, whereas the former cannot. Hence arises the necessity for mutual understanding. All class-war is undemocratic. There should be true fellow-feeling among all the citizens. Minorities should be treated as part of the people. They should also behave as such and should not ask for, nor be given privileges which mark them off from their fellow citizens. The solidarity of the State can be maintained by dispensing justice and not by conferring favours. In all democratic States education and other nation-building activities are the concern of all the citizens. Civic and national consciousness can only be developed by all citizens meeting upon a common platform, rising above racial, linguistic and religious differences. Religious toleration is a necessary concomitant of the development of democracy.

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The rich, who as a rule send their children to expensive schools, often grudge paying the taxes meant for the education of the poor man's children. They fail to see the inter-dependence of the various social units until a war comes and the truth is brought home to them that the poor man's son has to march on to the battle-field for protect-

ing the interests of the nation as a whole. The measures taken for ensuring public health are directly beneficial to all classes of citizens; the incidence of taxation is, of course, heavier on the rich who own more houses and other taxable property. Charity, either organized or individual, is another means by which social justice is done to the less fortunate by those who possess more of the world's goods. Religion is a great equalizer. By enjoining charity and neighbourly love it makes the rich give away with good grace and the poor accept the gift with thankfulness. Where the religious spirit pervades violent revolutions in the social order do not take place. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself,' gives the solution to all our social and religious problems. To practise the virtue of neighbourliness it is not necessary to reconstitute society on a class-less, caste-less basis; nor is there much advantage in introducing legislation to break down all existing barriers. What is wanted is a little widening of the heart. The good Samaritan, in the parable related in the Bible, had compassion on the wayfarer. He dressed his wounds, carried him to an inn and provided for his wants. Such fellow-feeling rising above caste and creed constitutes good neighbourliness.

* * *

The following prayer for all creeds appeared in the *Message of the East* about fourteen years ago.

'Almighty God—We who are of different races and faiths desire to realize together Thy Fatherhood and our kinship with each other. In our differences we find that many of our hopes, our fears, our aspirations are one. Thou art our Father and we are Thy children.

'We are heartily sorry for the mists of fear, envy, hatred, suspicion and greed which have blinded our eyes and thrust us asunder. May the light that comes from Thee scatter these mists, cleanse our hearts, and give health to our spirits. Teach us to put away all bitterness and to walk together in the ways of human friendship.

'Open our eyes to see that as nature abounds in variation, so differences in human beings make for richness in the common life. May we give honour where honour is due, regardless of race, colour or circumstance. Deepen our respect for unlikeness and our eagerness to understand one another. Through the deeper unities of the spirit in sympathy, insight and co-operation, may we transcend our differences. May we gladly share with each other our best gift and together seek for a human world fashioned in good under Thy guidance. Amen.'

This prayer was signed by three ministers of religions, belonging to the Roman Catholic, Jewish, and Methodist Episcopal persuasions. It is worth noting that differences in human beings make for richness in the common life and that we transcend our differences through the deeper unities of the spirit in sympathy, insight and co-operation.

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The immanence of God in all creation is accepted by most of the great religions. The Vedantist holds that the Atman is the Indweller in the bodies of all; the Christian speaks of the Church as the body of Christ who dwells in the inmost hearts of all the members; the Sufis among the Muslims interpret the unity of God by saying that He alone has being and the whole of creation is His manifestation. The higher thoughts of all great religions converge to the same point. Knowing the higher truths, the intellectually emancipated

man frees himself from all prejudices. Children and the pure in heart easily conceive of God as the common Father of all mankind and thereby rise above all narrowness. Men who possess neither intellectual emancipation nor purity of heart create discord by perceiving differences. We should learn to love and revere all great prophets and all disinterested workers who are builders of unity. The realization of the unity of mankind may come to us through philosophical knowledge, selfless service and friendliness and compassion that transcends the barriers of caste and creed. The fine arts and the sciences should become the handmaidens of religion. Comte believed that it will be possible to harmonize the idealism of the Greeks, the religious enthusiasm of the Middle Ages and the luxuriant naturalism of the Renaissance. The time is ripe for a wider synthesis. When the Caesars ruled in Rome, the West had scarcely any idea of the contemporary civilizations that flourished in the East. The East was also ignorant of the West. Such isolation was possible in the past. Now owing to the development of rapid means of communication, all parts of the world have been brought closer together. The East must understand Western culture and the West likewise should learn to evaluate the cultural treasures of the East. The mutual understanding can only be secured by sympathy, insight and co-operation. The prophets of all nations exhort us to rise above the entanglements of matter and realize our spiritual unity in God.

Life is a whole. The poet and the mystic who view it as a whole grasp the meaning of life. They proceed from lesser truths to greater truths by a method of synthesis. The man of intellect attempts to study the world around him by analysing it into parts; he loses

sight of the whole and thereby misses to comprehend the meaning of the whole. Is the universe a cosmos in which the parts have their significance only in relation to the whole or is it a chaos of conflicting forces that possess no definite aim or purpose? The perception of the fact that order pervades the universe and that the whole of creation is moving towards one ultimate goal invests individual life with a new meaning and a new significance. By an unconscious herd instinct, even the ignorant man develops a loyalty to the group to which he belongs. That very loyalty impels him to be inimical to other groups. The tribal god is a jealous god, for the infant societies which conceived the tribal god did not possess the vision of humanity as a whole. The prophets came and preached the brotherhood of man and the glorious destiny that is awaiting the race as a whole. The little tribal vanities which men developed in an earlier stage did not permit them to view the

whole. The Aryan and the Dasyu, the Jew and the Gentile, the Muslim and the Kafir, the Christian and the Heathen are the vestiges of old tribal vanities. These vanities based upon blind prejudice hide the face of truth and make men forget the universal teachings of the prophets. Hinduism preaches the divinity of man, perhaps much more emphatically than any other religion does. But, what do we see in practice? We see the votaries of this noble religion stultifying themselves before the public opinion of the world by branding one group of the adherents of their faith as untouchables. Can the tyranny of priest-craft go further? Renascent Hinduism should take immediate steps to remove the curse of untouchability and do social justice to all its adherents. It should also be tolerant to all religions and respect all religions not merely in theory but in practice.

MAYAVATI,
18 July 1941

INDIA'S EPOCHS IN WORLD-CULTURE

BY PROFESSOR DR. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR

(Concluded from the previous issue)

INDIA'S ADDRESS IN THE MODERN WORLD

I wish now to invite your attention to the ideological empire of the twentieth century which we Indians—Hindus and Mussalmans—have commenced establishing,—although for the time being on rather modest basis,—in Asia, Europe, Africa and last but not least America. This new empire is the second ideological contribution of India to world-culture. It is at present only in its rough, crude and humble beginnings. But I want to be perfectly

clear about the fact that even without political domination, nay, political freedom, it is possible to influence, convert, capture and conquer the world in ideas, ideals, arts and sciences.

In the twentieth century we are living under conditions of military-political subjection. Is it not ridiculous to think that a people that militarily and politically belongs to an alien empire should itself be credited with having established an ideological empire in the world? My answer to this and allied questions has already been furnished by the

experiences of ideological world-imperialism discussed above. We have historical evidences to the effect that ideological influence, conquest or domination is not necessarily a correlate of political activities.

We need not appeal always to the history of other epochs or other peoples in regard to human progress. Let us take the objective facts of India in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There is no doubt, let me repeat, that India is a subject country. And yet who, endowed with the objective sense, can doubt that the Indian people has been making progress in the same sense and along the same lines—although not perhaps to the same extent—as all the other peoples including the politically and militarily most dominant? The progress can be demonstrated by indices of all sorts.

It should be necessary at the outset to bid adieu to sentimentalizings about the alleged golden age in old India's epochs of military-political freedom. In regard to the economic situation you and I have to answer questions like the following: Did the Marathas enjoy greater prosperity under Shivaji and Baji Rao than to-day? Did the Bengalis enjoy greater prosperity in the days of Ali Vardi Khan or Vijayasena? Did the Punjabis enjoy greater prosperity under the Khalsas or Anandapala? Did the people of Madras enjoy greater prosperity under Tipu Sultan or Rajendra Chola? Statistically it is impossible to prove that India in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been becoming poorer and poorer. By all objective tests—in the matter of transport, export and import, agricultural output, manufactures and semi-manufactures, housing, all sorts of articles for consumption, even in the matter of the *dhoti* which you and I wear—by every economic index, it is possible to demonstrate

that even in spite of the foreign rule India has been progressing in the economic domain.

It is not my science to furnish arguments in justification of political-military subjection: Nor is it necessary for me to wax eloquent over the blessings of sovereignty in external and internal affairs. The glories of political freedom are by all means to be accepted as first postulates. Politics is indeed a force in human affairs and a powerful force. Freedom is a necessity for all mankind. But politics is not the only force. There are other forces not less powerful than freedom. A free country is not necessarily rich, nor is a subject country necessarily poor. However creative, inspiring and powerful political freedom may be as a spiritual and material force, it cannot, pragmatically considered, be taken to be the exclusive determinant in human civilization. A political interpretation of history in an Advaita or monistic manner is as untenable as a monistic economic interpretation or a monistic Freudian determinism.

I am convinced that we have to-day the beginnings of a new Indian Empire,—a new Indian nucleus of world-influences—which bids fair to be a worthy continuation of the ideological empire of the ancient and medieval Hindus. True it is that in the nineteenth century there was a great break in Indian creativity and culture-making desire and power. After the overthrow of Tipu Sultan and Baji Rao, and later, of Ranjit Singh, the entire Indian mentality became undoubtedly and almost entirely pessimistic. From one end of the country to the other, people lost all hopes. Was there anything to be done? European scholars, those 'friends of India,' came to us as teachers and we went to their country as pupils, as learners and we were

taught that our forefathers down to 1757, 1818, or 1857 were quite worthless people; and we were asked to believe that the East was fundamentally different from the West, and that there was nothing in common between the two. 'You, Orientals,' they said, 'you do not understand life, human beings, the earth, this world of ours. You do not understand secular interests, forts and fortifications, health and sanitation, construction of roads, village organization, family life, law and polity. These are much too material things for your mentality. The spiritual genius of India has always considered them to be beneath notice.' May be, why, almost certainly the Indians of that generation were flattered by such remarks coming from the Western 'friends of India,' from men like Max Muller, for example.

What, according to these Westerns, were the Orientals fit for? They conferred on Asia and especially on India the glory of extra-mundane achievements, the credit of understanding in an extraordinary degree the affairs of the other world, the spirit, the soul, communion with the divine, and what not. 'Don't you see,' said they in a seemingly appreciative manner, 'how wonderful the Indian intuition is? How exquisite and fine is the work of the Indian imagination! Your *forte* lies in the life after death. You are past masters in that life. Your brain is used to the super-sensual, the esoteric, the refined and delicate concerns of the transcendental world. Stick to that as your splendid patrimony. Don't soil your hands by touching the materialistic and dirty things of the life below.' That was the philosophy that Europe and America administered, not in homoeopathic doses, but in big allopathic doses, to the intellectuals of India, those who later became the

guardians of our morals and dominating personalities in our midst.

Naturally, as a consequence, the East, India, was regarded as just a continent of molly-coddles and slaves to be dominated by Europeans and Americans. In foreign countries a man from the East meant a coolie, an Indian was equivalent to a slave. In Europe and America an Indian at best meant only a student, just a learner going there for an academic degree and coming back with a certificate written by a white hand, to be cashed in the cultural stock exchanges of India,—Government offices and such other establishments—for a job of Rs. 250 to Rs. 1,250 per month.

All the same, the Indians—both Hindus and Mussalmans—were not unhappy to be thus entrusted by Euro-Americans with the glorious responsibility of managing the affairs of the Divine Communion. This was the position of India down to a particular time. But even India, often gullible as she is, could not be fooled all the time. The situation had to change, and it did change. How could the transformation be accomplished? How did Euro-Americans as well as Indians get debamboozled into the realities of the world-situation? How did the Westerns as well as the Indians themselves come to realize that the Indians were human beings of flesh and blood and not some messengers of God?

The opportunity came when in 1893 a mammoth clearing-house of cultures was convoked on the shores of the lake of Michigan at Chicago in the U.S.A. It was the meeting-place of about 5,000 men and women. There were the theologians and religious preachers, social scientists, anthropologists, philosophers, and natural scientists of the two hemispheres present. Most of them were

white but a few were yellow and brown like ourselves. That cultural exchange also counted among its members millionaires and milliardaires, big businessmen, transportation experts, engineers, chemists and mill-owners. It was this assembly of 5,000 Americans, Europeans and Asians that received for the first time a rude shock of a peculiar character. The rude shock was due to a bomb-shell thrown in the midst of that huge pandemonium declaring the equality between East and West. For the first time in the history of modern civilization and after the overthrow of Baji Rao and Ranjit Singh was heard the voice of Young India in and through that bomb-shell. It was the voice of a human being, not an esoteric creature dealing in the goods of the other world.

What he talked was perhaps not clear to many. But how he talked—the manner of his talk—was perceptible to all. It was challenging, it was a call to arms. The voice was that of modern India, an India bent upon a moral and intellectual tug of war with the world to-day. The audience had come to a Parliament of Religions. The impact of that bomb-shell was religious no doubt, but more than religious too. It covered the interests of entire human life, embracing as it did the whole problem of inter-racial contacts. The bomb-shell may be said to have announced to the world-pandemonium as follows:—‘You, Eur-Americans, from now on be ready to consider yourselves to be the pupils of Asia and, of course, of India also as the creator of modern values;—just as we are not ashamed to declare ourselves as the pupils of Eur-America. Reciprocal discipleship or reciprocal mastership is to be the relation from now on. No one-sided superiority or inferiority complex is to rule the international pattern to-morrow and day after to-morrow.’

That was, so to say, the Monroe Doctrine for Asia in the spiritual realm.

It went on, so to say, in the following strain: ‘You, Europeans and Americans, must not think that you are born to dominate Asia for all the centuries. Just note that you, Europeans and Americans, whether men or women, millionaires or multi-millionaires, are not going to have a greater domination on our Asian soil in the field of arts and sciences, morals, manners and sentiments than the Asians, although we are politically subject to some of yourselves, can have on Eur-American soil. We are going to dominate you ideologically to the same extent and in the same sense as you dominate us in the same field, although in military-political matters you happen to be our masters for the time being. If you want that our ideologies should be off Europe and America, from now on your ideologies should also be off Asia.’ This is the ideological Monroe Doctrine from the Asian side. The doctrine was enunciated for the first time in the history of modern civilization by a young man like many of the people present to-night. That young man was born on the banks of the southern Ganges and he was at once recognized as a re-creator of values, as a re-maker of mankind, as a world-conqueror. I refer to Swami Vivekananda.

I am not quoting the exact words of Vivekananda at the Parliament of Religions, Chicago. I am simply calling up before you my interpretation of the entire personality of Vivekananda, —the apostle of India’s might, the exponent of modern India’s values—in its orientations to the combined intelligence of Europe and America. Whatever may have been his topics and whatever his words, the audience discovered in this specimen of modern Indian manhood the determination of

Indians to struggle forward like human beings and get recognized as world-champions. It is not necessary for me to inquire into the question as to whether Vivekananda spoke about the Upanishads or the Vedanta, the Gita or Ramakrishna. That, certainly, he did. But whether he spoke about ancient times or modern times is for my purpose not the most important thing. What concerns me most is the total impact of Vivekananda the man on those 5,000 human beings, and on the millions of newspaper readers in the United States during the Parliament of Religions week and after. It was the picture of a human being addressing human beings and getting respected as a human being on terms of equality. It was not the Upanishads or the Vedanta that won recognition in that world-arena. The recognition of the Parliament and the people was conferred on the Young India of flesh and blood. The boldness of his challenge and the power of his conviction left no doubt that India did not live in the past but was virile enough to carve out an address for herself in the world of to-day. Vivekananda was accepted by Eur-America as a modern man, as a philosopher capable of solving modern problems in co-operation with Western thinkers.

Vivekananda is the man who for the first time in modern times succeeded in having the claims of modern India to creativity recognized by Eur-America and recognized as a contributor to the cultural expansion of mankind. Vivekananda was recognized as a world-power in America and also in Europe. He started the epoch of India's influences on modern nations. Further, he proved that in spite of a country being poor and in spite of its being a slave, it was possible for it to influence, to convert and to conquer the world. The

beginnings of a new Indian Empire were thereby laid in no mistakable manner. I call it the Ramakrishna Empire.

THE RAMAKRISHNA EMPIRE

The desire and the power of the Indian people to create and to dominate in the world of modern values have been in evidence uninterruptedly since the event of 1893. The 'ideas of 1905' constitute an important landmark as embodying in a concrete form on the Indian soil the spirit of world-conquest manifested by Vivekananda in the U.S.A. In 1940 it is possible to itemize the lines and amount of advance achieved during the last thirty-five years.

The progress that we have been able to accomplish during the last fifty years, especially since the glorious Bengali revolution of 1905,—the *Swadeshi* movement, the *Swaraj* revolution of Young India,—the progress that has been achieved in industrialization, banking, insurance, commerce, etc. as well as in scientific researches, in activities on the international plane is something of which any people in the world can be proud. The political, economic and cultural activities of Indians during the last thirty-five years are being watched by the entire world. What we are doing at Bombay, Calcutta, Madras or Lahore is attracting notice among all nations. It is being studied in New York, Tokyo, Berlin, Paris and last but not least in London. It will not do to be blind to the reality that our thoughts, our aims and our movements are already world-commodities. This little trade union movement over here and that little political activity over there are all being commented upon in the newspapers of the world. India has succeeded in establishing world-contacts. You and I are thus not tiny little bugs to be crushed

out of existence according to the whims of a particular group of individuals living in a certain corner of the earth. India is a power—of course, a junior power—among the powers of the world. She is influencing mankind in many directions although, no doubt, as yet not in a powerful manner. But men with eyes in East and West can see that Young India is already a creative force and has been establishing an address among the Vishwa-Shakti (world-forces) in the realm of ideas, ideals and creativities of the ideological type.

To-day there is hardly any journal of mathematics, physics, chemistry, geology, botany, zoology, medicine or the other natural sciences conducted by Europeans and Americans which is not publishing something by an Indian scholar or which does not review the work done by Indian scholars. Our Indian antiquarians and historians as well as researchers in the other human and social sciences have also come of age and have been recognized by European and American savants as their peers. This is a thing which was unknown even down to 1905. In all these arts and sciences Indians are not mere learners but have grown—although not in very large numbers yet—into teachers also. It is an aspect of world-domination in the sense of equality and constructive co-operation between East and West which has to be visualized in connection with the new Indian Empire of the twentieth century. Vivekananda was the founder of this new Indian Empire because in my opinion previous to him hardly any Indian had ever been recognized in Europe and America as a world-conquering force.

This new Indian Empire is not identical and is not to be confounded with the influences of ancient Indian culture on the Eur-American culture of the last

century and a half as noticeable in the romantic movement, 'new thought' cults, theosophy, vegetarianism and so forth. The modern West's interest in the old East, in the Asian literature, art, philosophy, etc. of bygone days, and in Orientalism as a branch of archaeological and antiquarian investigations is certainly an important feature in the contemporary contacts between India and Eur-America. But Vivekananda's pioneering goes much beyond this. It ushers in a new era of modern India's creations in the arts and sciences and co-operation with the modern West in the new problems of mankind.

Vivekananda is the first man to establish that empire, and it is lucky that with Vivekananda that empire did not cease to exist. He succeeded in leaving behind him a tradition of self-sacrifice, of the glorious vow of poverty, of spirituality combined with organizing power, and that tradition is embodied to-day in one of his creations, the Ramakrishna Mission. The activities of this Mission have reached in a somewhat stable albeit modest form several countries of Europe including England. The Mission is represented in South America also. In the United States of America it has centres in nearly a dozen cities. As is well known, the Mission has of course a network of institutions throughout India and Ceylon as well as Burma and the Federated Malaya States. Outside of Indian and Asian frontiers these institutions have served —although not yet in very considerable proportions,—to bring the Eur-American intellectuals, publicists, and culture-leaders into regular intercourse with the organizers of the Ramakrishna Order as well as other Indian scholars, businessmen and travellers. Contacts between East and West are thereby being maintained in Western centres of

learning, commerce and politics on terms of equality and mutual good will. An international co-operation of this type had never been attempted in modern times previous to the establishment of this new Greater India. This is why I have often described the Swamis of the Ramakrishna Mission as constituting the International Spiritual Service and the International Social Service of India. This body of cultural and ideological workers is not less profoundly constructive and significant for India and the world than the Indian Civil Service (I.C.S.), the Indian Medical Service (I.M.S.), the Indian Educational Service (I.E.S.), the Indian Police Service (I.P.S.) and so forth, or the several services maintained by the League of Nations.

The Ramakrishna Empire is not exclusively the work of the Ramakrishna Mission. It is the work of industrialists, of scientists, of antiquarians, of poets, of painters, of religious missionaries, of business magnates, of the trade unions, and of the political leaders of all denominations. By political leaders—though I do not belong to any political party—I mean not only people above forty but even young men and women between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five who are doing idealistic or constructive work. These young men and women are demonstrating to the world, along with the adults in letters, science and industry, trade union organizers, businessmen, and the Ramakrishna Mission that India is out conquering and to conquer. All those men and women, who are trying to crush to pieces the Himalayan obstacles that hamper the progress of India and to promote modern spirituality and society among the Indian people are establishing in their own personalities and in their daily activities that fundamental doctrine of equality between East and

West and international co-operation on terms of mutuality which is the spiritual foundation of the Ramakrishna Empire that has been pioneered by Vivekananda.

The Ramakrishna Empire is still in its nonage. It has just commenced its career and is hardly yet adequately known. But among its architects is to be mentioned the legion of men and women who are working at home and abroad in the most diverse fields of thought and action and in the most heterogeneous ways. Whatever is being done by Indians in industry, commerce, science, education, literature, fine arts, politics, labour organization, religion, and social service is a contribution to the strengthening of India's claims to recognition as a colleague of the other creative countries of the modern world. Not every builder of the Ramakrishna Empire is a religious preacher. Nor is every builder of this new Indian Empire a Hindu. The Mussalmans as well as the Christians of India have also been contributing to the Greater India as embodied in this empire. It is not to be supposed that the Ramakrishna Empire is being constructed exclusively by the intellectuals and other high-brows. The industrial workingmen in the factories of India are no less valuable builders of this organization than the Tatas and other industrialists. Nay, the Indian emigrants in the different overseas lands of the two hemispheres are also powerfully helping forward the evolution of this new Indian Empire in so far as they are exhibiting their creativities in a manner which can be recognized by their non-Indian colleagues as of at least equal worth with their own work in the same lines. Every Indian man and every Indian woman who embody in their daily thoughts and actions the desire and the power to influence, to

convert and to dominate are to be listed in the ever-growing schedule of the pillars of the Ramakrishna Empire.

Why do I call this 'Greater India' of to-day, this new Indian Empire of the twentieth century, the Ramakrishna Empire? My logic is very elementary. Vivekananda used to describe all his own activities as the activities of his Master, Ramakrishna. The empire that was brought into being by his personality is therefore aptly to be described, in my estimation, as the Ramakrishna Empire. And this is what I have done on several occasions, at Rangoon, Karachi, Calcutta, Delhi, Patna, Bombay and elsewhere (1936-1940).

For my logic I have some historical basis also. I wish you once more to recall the first ideological empire of ancient and medieval India. That Greater India was the cumulative result of all sorts of Indian thoughts and enterprises carried on for over a millennium and a half. The workers were in many instances Brahminic Hindu in the narrow sectarian sense. Not everybody among the Indian colonizers, missionaries and ideological empire builders of those days was thus strictly speaking a Buddhist. But it is very interesting that most of the Indian activities of that long period of history have come to be known in the world rightly or wrongly as Buddhist activities. The Greater Indias of those days have come to be described as so many bits of Buddhist India outside the Indian frontiers. That remarkable personality, Buddha, has furnished the name of the vast ideological empire of the Indians throughout the Asian Continent.

Asia was conquered by the spirit of India as a whole, not by the Buddhists as a sect or by the Shaivas as a sect or by the Vaishnavas as a sect. It is the

stories of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata that conquered for India the painters, sculptors, poets and preachers of Asia. It is the laws of Manu by which the social, economic and political norms of Asia were acculturated to Indian conditions. It is the Ayurvedic system of therapeutics that captured the medical experts of Asia. The Digvijaya of the decimal system of notation brought Asia within the Indian sphere of influence. Buddha was not the only Indian world-conqueror in Asia. And yet India is known in Asia as the land not so much of Rama, Shiva, Manu, Panini, Charaka and others as of Buddha. It is an accident of history perhaps. But it is a reality of international culture-contact.

Nothing is more curious than the fact that since the days of Yuan-Chwang, the Chinese scholar-organizer-educationist of the seventh century, even the *danton*, the twig that is used as tooth-stick, has been known in China as something Buddhist. And why? Because, in the mule-loads of things Indian carried to China by Yuan-Chwang from the land of Buddha were to be found hundreds of articles not excluding the *danton*. It is as if we in Asia were to describe the steam-engine as Christian because in sooth it was imported into Asia along with many other things from Europe whose inhabitants happen to be Christian by faith.

The ideological empire of the Indian people that has been slowly but steadily evolving since 1893 is but an embodiment of the creative urges of all the self-conscious men and women of India in their entirety. But I am following the precedent furnished by history in order to describe it after Ramakrishna because he was the inspirer of Vivekananda, who, as the representative of Young India, succeeded in laying the first foundation-stone. The Rama-

krishna Empire, then, as the successor of the Buddhist Empire, is growing into the second specimen of Indian ideo-

logical imperialism, constituting thereby another epoch of India in world-culture.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND MODERN INDIA

BY SWAMI JAGADISWARANANDA

The last century in which the great Swami appeared witnessed the end of the medieval age and the advent of the modern. India coming into contact with Europe was deluged by Western ideas and ideals. Thoughtless of the disastrous consequences, she began to ape the West and was about to sell her soul for a mess of pottage. English education and European civilization led to denationalization and Anglicization. Macaulay said rightly that no Hindu who received an English education could ever sincerely remain attached to his own faith. Modernization of India was, however, a necessity, for modernism is the only antidote to medievalism and modern thought is the only disinfectant for medieval errors. Sister Nivedita aptly observed that India is still in the throes of a passage from the medieval to the modern. This transition has turned all walks of collective life in modern India into a welter of confusion. The transitional age of chaos will continue for a few decades more until the last vestige of medievalism that is still sticking to the private corners of our social, national, and religious life disappears. European influence was so deep-rooted in the mind of the nineteenth century India that 'almost all the reformers of the last century,' remarks that famous French thinker, Romain Rolland, 'were Anglomaniacs and oscillated between the East and the West. Their characters also were compounded of the incompatible elements of the

East and the West.' The single exception, however, was Vivekananda's Guru, Sri Ramakrishna, who was not only free from occidental influence but was the perfect and spotless living example of the ancient Indian ideal. Blessed with the sublime vision of India's real soul, Vivekananda warned his bewildered countrymen thus: 'If India becomes English or Western she dies. India must remain Indian to uphold the highest torch of spirituality before the secular civilization of the materialistic world.'

Influenced by English education and European thought the young Swami in his pre-monk days turned agnostic for some time. He approached some religious worthies of his time but none could satisfy him with a direct reply about the existence of God. At last he went to Sri Ramakrishna and in the very first interview asked the question: 'Have you seen God?' 'Not only have I seen God but I can show Him to you; I see Him more intensely than I see you,' came the prompt and unequivocal reply from the God-intoxicated soul. This question was not a personal question. Vivekananda to Sri Ramakrishna. It was, in fact, the challenge of modern India to ancient India. Vivekananda voiced the Anglicized mind of modern India and Sri Ramakrishna truly represented ancient India. That was why he alone, of all his contemporaries, could accept the challenge. In every age God-men appear to make

such authoritative utterances. In one Upanishad we find one Vedīa Rishi expressing his illuminations thus: 'Here ye, children of Immortality and ye that reside on earth and in higher regions; I have realized that Cosmic Being who is ever effulgent like the sun and is beyond all darkness. By knowing Him alone, one can cross the ocean of worldliness and ignorance and attain immortality. There is no other way.'

The union of Vivekananda with Ramakrishna is pregnant with a national meaning. The divine union of these twin souls means reunion of modern India with ancient India. Vivekananda's surrender to Ramakrishna signifies modern India's acceptance of ancient India's heritage. Modern India that made up her mind to adopt new standards in individual, social, and national life embraced in and through Vivekananda her age-old ideals of life and society. This was the desideratum of the modern times; hence the Swami's appearance was a historical necessity. In his epoch-making speeches in India, Europe, and America the Swami quoted nothing but the Upanishads and the Gita. As Buddha democratized the Upanishads, the Swami spread the Vedanta in the world. He was the first authoritative exponent of the Upanishads to the Western nations. 'Had anything in this Evangel of modern Hinduism' reiterates Nivedita 'been his own, he would have been less than what he was.' Vivekananda was a lineal descendant of the Aryan Rishis, of Buddha, Krishna, and Shankara.

As the victory in the Russo-Japanese war ushered in a new era for Japan, so the epochal success of Vivekananda at the Chicago Parliament of Religions in 1893 inaugurated a new era for India. The success of the Swami's mission to the West was the first visible sign to the world that India was awake and was

out to conquer. The Swami's success increased the self-respect of the Indian people. Mr. M. R. Jayakar of Bombay once remarked that Vivekananda's name is a passport to the cultural centres of the West and his disciples and grand-disciples are really cultural ambassadors to the Western world. 'When he began to speak,' remarks Sister Nivedita 'it was of the religious ideas of the Hindus, but when he ended, modern Hinduism had been created. In him India learnt as a whole to understand the greatness of her own thought—a self-unification that gave birth to modern Hinduism. It was the religious consciousness of India that spoke through him to the modern West.' India proclaimed through him to the modern world the message of her people as determined by her hoary past. His Chicago Address was a brief charter of enfranchisement for India herself. He, by his new interpretation of Hinduism raised it to a universal status. He has internationalized Hinduism. That is why within hardly four decades of his demise, a growing number of permanent Hindu monasteries have been established in the West. He has, therefore, been rightly called the God-sent inaugurator of an unexpected era of world-wide expansion of Hinduism. As the new prophet of Hinduism the Swami made it clear to the Indians that India is not effete and old but young and vigorous and said, 'Let the foreigners come and flood this land with arms and ammunition; but up, up, India and conquer the world with spirituality.' The Swami wanted the Indians to believe that not only India had a great and glorious past but she was destined to have a still greater and brighter future. He was so consumed with this glorious vision of India's future that those who had the privilege to see and hear him got inspired with this vision. Nivedita

who was initiated into this vision by her Master wrote as follows: 'Just as Sri Ramakrishna, in fact, without knowing any books had been a living epitome of the Vedanta, so was Vivekananda of the national life. He never proclaimed nationality, but he was the living embodiment of the idea which that word conveys. My Master incarnates in his person the great national ideal.'

'What can I do for you, Swami?' was a frequent question of his admirers and friends in the West. 'Love India and serve India,' was his invariable reply. The monk and the patriot were curiously blended in him and Sister Nivedita has recorded in her reminiscences how often he passed from one mood to the other. A prophet is not a person as such. He is a 'National Person,' says Aldous Huxley. That means a prophet never lives on the plane of personality, the small self like the ordinary worldlings. He identifies himself with the whole nation and scarcely comes down to the individual mood except at the time of eating and other physical necessities. Pain and pleasure of the nation become his pain and pleasure.

C. F. Andrews in the *Rise and Growth of the Congress in India* aptly remarks that 'the Swami's intrepid patriotism gave a new colour to the national movement throughout India. More than any other single individual of that period Vivekananda had made his contribution to the new awakening of India. Even without being connected with the Congress, he very largely shaped its policy and promoted its evolution.' The Swami very clearly described his ideal of nation-building in India which in his opinion must be firmly founded on religion. 'The political systems that we are struggling for,' said the Swami, 'have been tried for centuries in Europe and found want-

ing; let religion be given a chance as in ancient India.' The nation in India, he predicted, will be a union of those whose hearts beat in the same spiritual tune, and national union in India will be a union of scattered spiritual forces. In modern India, as in the ancient, religion will be the key-note, the central theme, the life-blood and everything else will be secondary.

Vivekananda was the first and the foremost apostle of modern India to understand the genius of Indian history and to appreciate the true worth of Indian culture. All the thinking about national and social reconstruction in modern India has been done by the Swami for us. He has also given a clear-cut outline of the principles of nation-building.

If we compare the renaissance of modern India with that of other modern nations, the Swami's prophecy will be more clear to us. The awakening in modern Italy originated from the inspiring thoughts of Mazzini and Garibaldi; that in modern Russia from those of Maxim Gorky and Karl Marx; and that in France from those of Rousseau and Voltaire. But in modern India it is the ideas of religious apostles like Raja Rammohan, Vivekananda, Dayananda, Keshab Chandra and others that brought about the new regeneration. So the case of India is quite different from that of Italy, Russia, France or Germany. Plato had dreamt of an ideal State which would be ruled by wise men. In his *Republic* he says that the city and the society will never cease from evil unless politics and religion are combined together and politicians become philosophers (wise men). The great Greek thinker tried to realize his dream in some Mediterranean State but failed because the Governor of the State was not a philosopher. The Rishis of ancient India did realize such a collec-

tive society and modern India is fated to be blessed with such a new nation on earth, provided she does not adopt fascism or communism or any other 'isms' of the West and banish religion from her collective life. The Swami predicted even long before the birth of communism that the new age is for the Shudras or labourer class and the nation's genius would in this age rise in the labourers, i.e. the peasant, the cobbler, the cooly, etc. The Brahmin, the Kshatriya, and the Vaishya had their chances in the preceding ages, so the labourers will play their part in the modern age. A study of the national ideals of other countries will give us a better conception of Swami Vivekananda's glorious vision of modern India. India is the only country in the world that has worked for centuries to make religion the distinctive feature of her national life, just as other nations have struggled hard to form their principal themes in other fields. Equality and excellence of social life characterize the national life of the U.S.A. Men of subject nations with their bent backbone, due to poverty of education and wealth, live and move like face citizens after some months' sojourn in the Yankee soil. Germany has perfected herself in military science and intellectual supremacy. It is said that during the last world war the German soldiers used to pour over, in their barracks, the books of Kant, Hegel, and other serious authors, while the British soldiers devoured in their leisure hours the six-penny novels. Britain, on the other hand, has excelled in empire-building and commercial science. Oxford University is said to have included empire-building as a subject in its curriculum of studies. Even the missionaries and professors that come from that island to other countries of her vast empire, are imbued with imperialistic views.

Sir S. Radhakrishnan clearly analyses in his *East and West in Religion* how they have politicized religion! But India being God-guided has succeeded, in contradistinction to all other nations on earth, in giving a religious character even to politics. In India the medical science is a Veda, a scripture, music the science of sound is an art of prayer, and the Fine Arts, a kind of ritual worship. Swami Vivekananda reminded modern India of her national characteristics in unmistakable terms just at the psychological moment.

The two forces of Bharata Shakti are nation-building and world-moving. The former was manifest in Bhagavan Buddha who Aryanized the whole of the Far East and converted it into Greater India. China, Japan, Siam, and other Buddhist countries were actually civilized by Indian religion and culture, for Aryanization means civilization, remarks the great philosopher of history, Mr. Waddell. The self-governing countries of Siam and Japan have been made nations by Bharata Shakti. The nation-making power of Bharata Shakti was exhibited in Shankara who Indianized Buddhist India with her many foreign races and faiths. Indianization is nothing short of Hinduization. But for Shankara's Hinduization India could not have been able to absorb and assimilate so many alien elements in her race and religion. Both the forces of Bharata Shakti mentioned above were together incarnate in this new age in the person of Swami Vivekananda who has awakened India from her deep slumber of about one thousand years of self-forgetfulness and founded a country-wide organization of social reconstruction and cultural revival that has got by now about three hundred centres, (both affiliated and non-affiliated) in India, Burma, and Ceylon. The Ramakrishna Mission,

founded by him, has two distinct features. The domestic policy of this 'non-sectarian sect' is to achieve cultural unity in the Hindu world by emphasizing the common bases of Hinduism. As Sri Ramakrishna was, in the words of P. C. Majumdar, not only a Shaiva, or a Shakta, or a Vaishnava, or a Vedantist etc., but he was *all these* and many more, so the Mission named after him is not fanatical of any particular doctrine of Hinduism, but accepts and harmonizes all Hindu sects on the universal foundation of Advaita.

The aim of his whole life, as the Swami had said to Sister Nivedita in Kashmir, was to make Hinduism aggressive and dynamic like Islam and Christianity. He was constantly pre-occupied with the thought of Hinduism as a whole and loved very much to dwell on the spectacle of her historical emergence. In the words of Nivedita 'Vivekananda's message is not only a gospel to the world at large, but to his own children the charter of the Hindu faith. What Hinduism needed amidst the general disintegration of the modern era was a rock where she could lie at anchor, an authoritative utterance in which she could recognize herself. For ages to come the Hindu man who would verify, the Hindu mother who would teach her children what was the faith of their ancestors, would turn to Vivekananda for assurance and light. What Hinduism needed was the re-organization and consolidation of thoughts and activities, ideas and ideals, and what the world needed was a religion which had no fear of any truth, scientific or philosophical.' All these are found in the message of Vivekananda which is really the Magna Charta for modern Hinduism.

The Swami prophesied that Hinduism will no longer remain a stationary system but will prove herself capable of

welcoming and embracing the whole modern development. The Eternal Religion of ours must become militant and proselytizing, capable of sending out special missions to foreign countries and of reclaiming into her own fold her own children that had been converted from her and of the conscious and deliberate assimilation of new elements. In the opinion of the Swami the Sikhs, the Jains, the Buddhists, the Aryas, and the Brahmos are no less Hindus. He has given a very broad definition of modern Hinduism. 'No army then carries the banner of so wide an empire,' remarks an English thinker, 'as that of Hinduism thus defined.' It is gratifying to see that Hindu leaders of modern India have accepted this definition of Hinduism. Mr. V. D. Savarkar, the President of the Hindu Mahasabha, defines Hinduism just in the same way in his *Hindutva*. The only difficulty in absorbing foreign elements into our race and religion is our social rigidity, but when our orthodox society has already opened its doors to them there is no other obstacle in the path of our expansion and assimilation. Inter-marriage has already been going on between the Sikhs and the Hindus in Sind, between Aryas and Hindus in the Punjab, between the Jains and the Hindus in Gujarat, between the Brahmos and Hindus in Bengal, between the Buddhists and Hindus in Ceylon and Burma. The late Rev. Uttama of Burma, in his presidential speech to the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, remarked that Buddhists are also Hindus culturally, racially, and religiously. In Buddhist and Moghul India, Hindu religion and society did absorb many non-Indian elements deliberately. In course of time, the renascent culture and religion of the Hindus will affect and influence Zoroastrianism, Islam, Christianity, and

Judaism in such a way that they will be, like Jainism and Buddhism, accommodated in the broad bosom of Hinduism like Hindu sects. Zoroastrianism has already shown signs of unification. Christianity and Judaism have already yielded to the current of Indianization as is evident in the work of the Christ-Kula Ashrama of Madras and the Christ Prema Sangha of Poona. Sufism, Bahaism, and Ahmadiya Association and Khoja movement are trying to liberalize Islam and harmonize it with Hinduism. Modern Hinduism has already accepted the Semitic prophets of Islam and Christianity in the panel of her prophets in and through Sri Ramakrishna.

Dr. Norman Brown of Pennsylvania University, U.S.A., and Baron Omar Rolf Ehrenfels, a German Muslim, who travelled over India for the purpose of making special studies of the interaction of Islam and Hinduism, have un-animously opined that Semiticism will undergo amalgamation in modern India and lose its identity in Hinduism. Baron Ehrenfels remarks that the living existence of the ancient culture of Hinduism will change in some way or other the former condition of Indian Muslim culture, as was the case with European Christian culture, at the time of the Renaissance.

By reminding the Hindu nation of the interrelation of all parts of its own faith the Swami has revitalized modern Hinduism so forcibly that she is gradually becoming aware of herself as an organized unity. He pointed out that the vast complexus of systems that make up Hinduism is characterized by infinite inclusiveness. He said that the unique glory of Hinduism is her doctrine of the Ishta-Devata (chosen ideal) which makes it tolerant of every possible form of faith and culture. He has given a pragmatic bent, a practical

turn to Hinduism. Sir J. C. Bose truly said that true Hinduism made man work, not dream. The Swami also is the founder of a new order of Hindu monasticism (the first order since the close of Buddhist missions), whose mission is to unite all Hindu sects in India and expand Hinduism abroad.

A few words about the personality of the Swami and we have finished this long dissertation. The national and international aspect of his meteoric life has been portrayed above. 'He was a warrior monk,' said Annie Besant. 'He was a soldier monk,' said Nivedita. One Western savant has spoken of him as 'the Napoleon of Hinduism.' At the sight of the steady progress of Hinduism in Europe and America, a missionary has written a book to prove that Hinduism invades America. One American has compared the Swami with Caesar and Kaiser. With his magnetic personality and majestic appearance he was literally an apostle of manliness. 'The older I grow,' he confided to a disciple once, 'the more it appears to me that the whole of religion can be summed up in one word "manliness."' As a monk he was an inborn lover of death and worshipper of the terrible. Sister Nivedita observes: 'His personal ideal was that Sannyasin of the Sepoy Mutiny who, stabbed by an English soldier, broke the silence of fifteen years to say to his murderer, "And thou also art He."' In the language of the *Dhammapada* he wandered alone in the world like a rhinoceros, fearing nothing and caring for nothing even as a lion not trembling at noises, even as a wind not caught in the net, and even as the lotus-leaf unstained by water. He preached renunciation instead of Mukti; self-abandonment, instead of self-realization. 'Go thou,' he said once to Nivedita, as if addressing in one person each separate soul that would ever come to him for

guidance, 'and follow Him (i.e. Buddha) who was born and gave his life for others five hundred times before he attained Buddhahood.'

It is a man-making and character-building religion that he lived and taught. Eternal fearlessness and un-failing faith in ourselves were his gospel of life. His constant exhortation was to banish all ideas of weakness from our mind. He preached Vedanta, because it alone of all religions, teaches men that infinite capacity and possibility lie dormant in each soul. He realized under painful necessity that not only an alien rule but also our own religion has made us slaves. He was such a strong lover of freedom that he was reluctant to call man the servant of even God. This made Vivekananda roar as the lion of Vedanta thus: '“Dasoham, Dasoham,” (I am a slave,

I am a slave) we have been saying for centuries politically and spiritually. Let us at least once in life say, “Shivoham, Shivoham,” (I am Shiva, the Spirit, eternally free and ever perfect).’ To future followers he has left his undying blessings—‘Be greater than myself.’ While pacing up and down in the courtyard of the Belur monastery on the very day of his passing away, he was heard muttering to himself, ‘If there were another Vivekananda he would have understood what this Vivekananda has done! And yet how many Vivekanandas will be born in future.’ Vivekananda’s clarion call is still resounding in the sky of India, calling Indian youths for service and sacrifice. The Swami is dead and gone, but his impersonal and immortal voice comes rolling down through the years with added strength: ‘Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.’

KALI DANCING ON THE BREAST OF SHIVA

BY PROF. AKSHAYA KUMAR BANERJEA

I. RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY AND ART

In Hinduism Religion, Philosophy and Art have always developed in the closest embrace with one another. It is the spiritual urge in the Hindu mind that has found expression in various forms of religious discipline, various systems of philosophical speculation, as well as various types of artistic creation. The religious rites and ceremonies, the social customs and institutions, the ethical ideals and duties, the aesthetic tastes and ideas, the senses of value and dignity, that have for centuries and millenniums exercised a governing influence upon the lives and thoughts and feelings of all classes of the Hindus, owe their origin

and sustenance generally to the same spiritual urge for self-realization or salvation or freedom from worldly bondage. In order to find out a rational basis for their religious and moral conceptions and to offer rational interpretations to the mystic supersensuous experiences of the truth-seers and saints, the Hindu thinkers devoted themselves to metaphysical speculation. The truths seen by the Rishis and rationally established by the philosophers were presented to the people at large in various artistic forms by the master artists,—by the poets, the musicians, the painters, the sculptors, the Pauranikas and others.

To the Hindus the highest philosophical truths are not mere abstract

concepts to be speculated upon and logically established, but concrete realities to be experienced and enjoyed. To them Philosophy is particularly concerned with the rational understanding of the ultimate Truth, which lies hidden within the phenomenal universe and also beyond it. Philosophy seeks to convince the intellect related to the world of finite, transitory, contingent, mental, and material facts that what is conceived or intuited as the ultimate Truth is rationally consistent with the nature of all these facts of experience and capable of furnishing adequate explanation for their origination, transformation, arrangement, adjustment, destruction, etc. Religion is concerned with the systematic discipline of the entire being of man—of his body, senses, mind and heart—for the direct immediate intuitive experience of the Truth. The Truth is self-existent and self-shining, transcendent as well as all-pervading, always and everywhere present and perceptible. It is the self-luminous essence of the mind as well as the abiding essence of all the objects of the mind's experience and thought. There is only a veil of ignorance between the Truth and the mind, and hence we see the finite transitory distorted appearances of the Truth and not the Truth Itself. The purpose of all forms of religious discipline—physical, psychical, moral and intellectual—is ultimately to remove this veil of ignorance, this obstacle in the way of the self-revelation of the Truth to the mind, and to bring the human consciousness face to face with the real nature of the Truth.

Art plays the important part of making the Truth lovable and enjoyable to the human heart. It constructs a bridge between the Supersensuous and the sensuous, the Infinite and the finite, the Eternal and the transient, the Intangible and the tangible, the Formless and the forms, the Spiritual and the material.

Art gives concrete, visible, tangible, material forms to the abstract concepts of metaphysics and the spiritual truths of religious experience. But the forms are so designed that they immediately lead the imagination to the formless. The products of mystic Art are finite and transitory in forms, but infinite and eternal in significance. They seek to bring the Spiritual Truth down to the plane of sensuous experience, and to charm the imagination up to the plane of the supersensuous Reality. Unlike the natural objects of ordinary sense-perception, the products of the spiritual Art instead of veiling the Truth seek to unveil Its inner character through their suggestive powers. They are meant to be Images of Truth.

II. HINDU DEITIES AND THEIR IMAGES

The Hindu artistic genius shone forth brilliantly in the conception and execution of the images of Gods and Goddesses. These Deities are living Realities of the supernatural and supersensuous planes. They have existence of a higher order than the objects and phenomena of this world of gross sense-experience. They reside within the hearts of the different departments of Nature and preside over their operations. They are self-conscious Moral and Spiritual Powers, determining the courses of events in Nature,—in the physical, the animal and the human worlds,—in accordance with eternal, moral and spiritual principles. They create harmony in the midst of discord, adjustment in the midst of catastrophes, ethical relations in the midst of physical interactions, ordered progress in the midst of various disruptive forces.

The Hindu spiritual insight discovered the dynamic presence of these Moral and Spiritual Agencies behind and within and above the natural phenomena of sense-experience. The enlightened moral and

spiritual sense of the Hindu sages penetrated through the veils of the outward appearances of the phenomena and forces of nature and got direct access to these Deities. They saw them, they talked to them (with *mantras*), they pleased them with their noble actions and religious observances, they formed alliance with them, they exacted favours from them, they exerted influence upon them. This was manifested in their exercising occasional moral control upon the courses of natural events. The stories they related about the lives and activities of these Deities are from our point of view the moral and spiritual interpretations they offered of the remarkable phenomena of nature, including the phenomena of human history. These stories represented their outlook on life and the world, the modes of their study of the facts of sensuous experience. They generally found some deeper truth underlying the outward appearances of phenomena.

The artists with spiritual insight endowed these Deities,—these supernatural and supersensuous Moral and Spiritual Agencies seen by the sages,—with appropriate bodily forms and symbols, which might easily signify and suggest their real characters and their relations to natural phenomena, and might open and enlighten the inner sense of the onlookers.

Though these Deities, being supernatural and supersensuous Realities, have existence of a higher order than the natural and sensuous creatures of this world, and being Moral and Spiritual Agents regulating the physical and psychological phenomena have higher truths embodied in them than the latter, they are not ultimate self-existent and self-luminous Realities, they do not represent the highest Truth, the highest Good, the highest Beauty and the highest Bliss sought after by our innermost consciousness. They are more permanent and

more brilliant manifestations of the Absolute Reality than the creatures of the sensible world; in them the Truth, Goodness, Beauty and Bliss pertaining to the nature of the Absolute Spirit are manifested in much higher degrees; the veil of Ignorance concealing the 'face of Truth' is much thinner and more transparent in the characters of these moral and spiritual Realities. But nevertheless they are partial and imperfect manifestations of the ultimate Reality. So long and so far as the idea of Plurality and the idea of difference among them exist, the veil remains and the Truth is not perfectly manifested.

The Supreme Spirit,—the self-existent, self-luminous, differenceless, non-dual, supra-personal Being, above time and space, above motion and rest, above all ethical and spiritual distinctions,—is the Truth and Soul of all these Deities. The Supreme Spirit is the Ground and Source, the Preserver and Regulator, as well as the final Ideal and End, of all the Plurality, whether sensuous or supersensuous, mental or supra-mental, physical or psychological, moral or aesthetic. Truth, Goodness, Beauty and Bliss are eternally realized in the absolute and perfect unity of His nature.

The Hindu spiritual Art has attempted to give sensuous forms to this highest Truth also in various ways, just as the Hindu religious systems have discovered different modes of approach to It and different kinds of discipline for Its realization. The Images in which the Supreme Spirit is sought to be represented, are generally worshipped with the deepest devotion by the advanced types of devotees for perfect self-realization.

III. THE IMAGE OF KALI ON THE BREAST OF SHIVA

One of the most magnificent attempts of the Hindu artists for giving a sensuous representation to the Supreme Truth of

the universe realized by the Hindu saints is to be found in the Image of Kāli dancing on the breast of Shiva. Leaving aside the ludicrous pictures produced by men with little or no spiritual insight, the Image of Kāli which is worshipped throughout the length and breadth of India has a comprehensive philosophy and a deep spiritual realization embodied in it.

Kāli, the Divine Mother of the universe, with Her all-naked, awe-striking, dark-complexioned, well-formed body, with Her wide-open breast wearing a garland made of the heads of the departed creatures, with Her four hands stretched out in four directions and holding respectively the bleeding head of a demon, a sharp dazzling sword, a banner of universal fearlessness and an offer of blissful boon, with Her eyes smiling in joy and Her tongue bitten by Her teeth through wonder and admiration at Her own appearance and performance, with Her legs in a dancing pose, stands on the breast of all-white Shiva, who is lying under Her feet absolutely calm and motionless and breathless, with His eyes closed in the deepest self-concentration and without any outward sign of life. In order to appreciate the true significance of this grand Image, it is necessary to have at least some acquaintance with the Hindu conception of Shiva and Kāli and their relation, the Hindu view of the plan and process of the universe, the Hindu outlook on the human life and its highest ideal. Whoever might have originally conceived the Image or to whomsoever the Supreme Truth might have revealed Itself in this form, the Image splendidly represents the Vedantic conception of the spiritual Substance, Ground and Cause of universe.

IV. CONCEPTION OF SHIVA

Kāli represents the Divine Mother—the dynamic self-conscious and self-

modifying material cause—of the world of finite and transitory realities, and Shiva lies under Her feet as Her spiritual substratum and ground and support. Shiva is all-white, there being no distinction of colours in Him, all the diversified colours being perfectly unified in His transcendent nature. He lies absolutely motionless, absolutely changeless and effortless, absolutely disinterested in and unaffected by the cosmic play that is eternally going on on His breast. But with His eyes closed to the world, with His heart not beating in tune with the worldly changes, with His life-breath in absolute equilibrium, He is perfectly self-conscious within Himself. In His consciousness, or rather super-consciousness, there is no duality, no plurality, no relativity, no differentiation, no process, no distinction between subject and object, between the known and the knowable, between 'is' and 'was' and 'will be,' between 'is' and 'ought' and 'may-be' and 'must-be' between good and evil, beauty and monstrosity, happiness and sorrow, creation and destruction. This is why from the worldly view-point Shiva is represented as *Shava*, a Person wholly dead to the world. The world is as good as non-existent to Him, and He appears to be practically non-existent to the world,—the world where diversities and distinctions and struggles for existence prevail, where nothing can be even conceived as existent except in relation to and contradistinction from other beings. Shiva is accordingly often spoken of as 'God of Death,' and 'God of absolute unity' may quite properly be so called.

This Shiva, who appears as dead or non-existent to the worldly creatures dominated and blinded by diversities, is conceived by the wise and enlightened as alone self-existent and as the sole ground of all orders of worldly existences. He alone exists, and exists

necessarily, in Himself, by Himself and for Himself, and not through any struggle or exertion for existence, or by any process of Becoming, or for serving any purpose in a system of existences. His existence is at the basis of all time and space, at the basis of all relativity and contingency, at the basis of all differences and struggles. His existence is Self-luminous Being. Neither Existence nor Consciousness can be regarded as predicates or attributes to Him. He is Existence; He is Consciousness. All the things of the universe and the universe itself have existence only in so far as they participate in His nature, in so far as they are partial and limited manifestations of Him. All conscious beings are conscious, in so far as He reveals Himself through them. It is His consciousness which appears under various limitations in the diverse minds and manifests itself as knowing and feeling and willing in relation to diverse worldly phenomena. Perfect self-consciousness and perfect self-existence are identical in significance, and they likewise involve the notion of the eternal realizedness of the ultimate ideals of human consciousness, viz. absolute Goodness, absolute Truth, absolute Beauty and absolute Bliss. Ideas of differences among these ideals imply their imperfections, their partial characters. In the stage of perfect realization there is no distinction among them. In the absolute Existence-Consciousness that Shiva represents, all ideals are eternally realized and perfectly unified. Hence there is no difference of any kind in His transcendent nature. All the powers and attributes that we can conceive of are eternally present in Him in their perfection and hence exist in Him in their undifferentiated reality, in their absolute unity and identity with Him. Shiva, from this view-point, is the sole Reality, the Absolute Truth, the One without a second.

This is the conception of Shiva, described in sublime and beautiful language in the Násadiya Sukta of Rig-Veda, in the Mandukya, Shvetáshvatara, Kaivalya and several other Upanishads, in the Shiva-Gita and other Shaiva treatises.* Shiva is identified with Brahman of Vedanta Philosophy and some of the principal Upanishads.

V. SHIVA AND HIS POWER

Shiva, being the sole self-existent Reality, must have the dynamic cause, the creative Power, for the production of all contingent, temporal, finite existences, inherent in His nature. We ourselves and the world of our normal experience must have been evolved from Him, must be sustained by Him, and must ultimately be merged in Him. He must be the Self of all, the Source of all, the Lord of all, the Illuminator of all, the Preserver of all and the Destroyer of all. It is He who must be regarded as having manifested Himself in these diverse names and forms that constitute the world. The Power and Will for such diversified self-manifestation must accordingly be supposed to be eternally existing in His bosom, eternally present in His nature, and as such essentially

• यदाऽतमस्तन्न दिवा न रात्रिः न सङ्गचासन् शिव
एव केवलः ।

तदन्तरं तत् सवितुर्वरेण्यं प्रज्ञा च तस्मात्
प्रसृता पुराणी ॥
(श्वेताश्वतर)

नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिःप्रज्ञं नोभयतःप्रज्ञं न
प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं नाप्रज्ञम् ।
अदृष्टमव्यवहार्यमगाह्यमलक्ष्यमचिन्त्यमव्यव-
देश्यमेकात्मप्रत्ययसारम्
प्रपञ्चोपशमं शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स
आत्मा स विज्ञेयः ॥

अचिन्त्यरूपमव्यक्तमनन्तममृतं शिवम् ।
आदिमध्यान्तरहितं प्रशान्तं ब्रह्म कारणम् ।
एकं बिभुं विद्वानन्दमरूपमजमद्वैतम् ॥

(शिवगीता)

non-different from Him. When this Power lies asleep in Him, when it is unmanifested in creative activities, there is no differentiated existence, no particularized consciousness, no distinction between being and non-being, knowledge and ignorance, light and darkness, good and evil, subject and object. (Násadiya Sukta). This is the conception of Mahá-pralaya, in which Shiva alone exists in His transcendent unity, and from which state the Power manifests itself in dynamic form and as Cosmic Energy, the Mother of the universe. From the noumenal and supra-temporal point of view, the Cosmic Energy with all Her manifestations is eternally identical with Shiva, because She has no existence apart from the existence of Shiva, the Absolute Spirit; while from the phenomenal and temporal point of view She is an eternally self-modifying creative, regulative and destructive Power evolved from and illumined and supported by and in this sense distinct from the changeless, effortless, self-existent, self-luminous Spirit. This Power of Shiva and Mother of the universe is Káli.

Thus from one point of view Káli is eternally within the bosom of Shiva, indistinguishable from His essential, transcendent, differenceless, self-existent and self-luminous nature; while from another point of view, She rises from the bosom of Shiva, is standing and dancing on the bosom of Shiva, is ceaselessly passing through multiform, finite self-modifications without losing Her self-conscious identity with Shiva under Her feet as Her ground and support. In relation to the phenomenal world She is the inexhaustible omnipotent cosmic energy, the Mother of all diversities, and in relation to Shiva She is the Divine Power, supremely intelligent and omniscient, supremely good and beautiful and majestic, supremely loving and blissful and self-enjoying. She plays Her part eter-

nally on the infinite breast of Shiva, with a view to the diversified and progressive realization of the infinite existence, consciousness, goodness, beauty and bliss of Shiva in and through a phenomenal system of finite existences, finite consciousnesses, imperfect goodnesses, imperfect beauties and imperfect enjoyments. She is eternally in the devoted service of Shiva, to whom She belongs, to whom She is eternally wedded.

VI. SHIVA'S MANIFESTATION THROUGH KÁLI

Without Shiva Káli has no existence, and without Káli Shiva has no expression. It is through the manifestation of Káli that Shiva, the eternal infinite inactive impersonal Being-consciousness, becomes a dynamic self-conscious, self-realizing Personal Being. It is in and through Káli that Shiva knows Himself, enjoys Himself, manifests Himself;—He divides Himself, as it were, into subject and object, knower and knowable, enjoyer and enjoyable, doer and deed, and becomes an active Personality. Shiva is the Soul of Káli, and Káli as manifested is the embodiment of Shiva. In the unmanifested state Káli is identical with Shiva, and Shiva is the differenceless non-dual Reality.

Káli, in course of Her dancing movements on the breast of Shiva, gives phenomenal, differentiated expression to His eternally transcendent, undifferentiated nature. She displays the infinite, supra-temporal, necessary existence of Shiva in the forms of countless varieties of finite, transitory, contingent existences. She manifests the pure, transcendent absolute consciousness of Shiva in the forms of innumerable finite phenomenal consciousnesses. She exhibits the absolute, transcendent, undifferentiated, non-dual Knowledge, Goodness, Beauty and Bliss of Shiva's character in the forms of phenomenal dualities

of knowledge and ignorance, good and evil, beauty and ugliness, happiness and misery. She presents the eternally self-fulfilled reality of Shiva in the form of a temporal process of progressive realization and His supra-temporal and supra-spatial spiritual infinity in the form of beginningless and endless extent and continuity in time and space. Through the operation of Kāli, Shiva's changeless Being appears as continuous Becoming. His self-luminous, actionless, blissful existence appears as an omniscient and omnipotent creative and destructive Force. His perfectly peaceful and differenceless unity appears as the supreme principle of unity in diversities, as the ground of harmony in the midst of discord, as the force of love in the midst of hatred and competition and hostility.

VII. THE WORLD SYSTEM AND THE UNDERLYING SPIRIT

The Image of Kāli dancing on the breast of Shiva vividly presents before us the great Truth that all creations and destructions, all struggles for existence and the concomitant hostilities and atrocities and triumphs and frustrations in the animal world, all the apparent prosperities and adversities, vanities and lamentations, ascendencies and degradations, of individuals and races and communities, all the thunders and cyclones and tornadoes and earthquakes that strike us with horror and cause havoc in the world, —all these have an underlying spirit and a plan and purpose behind them, that all these are organically related to one another having their proper places

and functions in a grand harmonious cosmic system, that all these are well-regulated modes of self-expression of and belong to the all-comprehending Divine Body of one supreme, omnipotent and omniscient Personality, that they have as their ultimate ground and support one absolutely true, good, beautiful and blissful Spirit, in whom all that we love and adore and seek after and hope for are eternally realized and united. The Image tells us that the world, however bewilderingly diversified and complicated, however infested with agonies and catastrophes, however apparently shocking or frightening or loathsome many of its phenomena may be to our finite understanding and feeling, is originated from and planned and regulated by the omnipotent and omniscient Power (*Shakti*) of *Satya-Shiva-Sundara*,—the True, the Good, the Beautiful. It teaches us that Shiva's Existence is the true existence of all, that Shiva's spirit animates and illumines everything in the universe, that Shiva's character is hidden in the heart of every phenomenon. It invites us to see *Satya-Shiva-Sundara* reflected upon whatever we observe, whatever we feel, whatever we think of. Kāli is the embodiment and self-expression of Shiva, and the world is the self-manifestation of Kāli. Shiva is *Sat-Chit-Ananda* (Being-Consciousness-Bliss), Kāli is *Sat-Chit-Ananda-Mayee* (the embodiment of Being-Consciousness-Bliss), and the universe is Kāli manifested in time and space. This represents the Hindu conception of the universe.

(To be continued)

LOVE CONQUERS DEATH

BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

[Savitri successfully pleads before the god of Death and saves her husband, Satyavan. Alcestis of the Greek legend delivers her husband, Admetus, from death by dying in his stead. The gods were pleased and Hercules brings back Alcestis from the lower regions to the land of the living. Here, in this story, Behula saves her husband, Lakhai, from the consequences of Manasa's curse. In all cases it is woman's love that saves life from the jaws of death.—Ed.]

I

The great merchant prince Chand, or Chand-Sadagar as he was called, lived in the city of Champaka. He was a steadfast devotee of Shiva. It was ordained that the worship of Manasa—a female deity who ruled over the snake world—would not be introduced amongst men, unless and until Chand-Sadagar first offered worship to her. But Chand was so much one-pointed in his devotion to Shiva that he could not and would not think of any other deity. Manasa was in a fix. If Chand did not agree to worship her, she was to go without having any worship from anybody in the world. Manasa wanted to cajole and coax Chand; she tried to bribe him with many favours. But Chand was adamant—he would not divert his attention to any other god. Being exasperated Manasa threatened Chand that she would ruin him, if he did not come down. This attitude of Manasa rather hardened him against her. So ensued a fight between Chand and Manasa—between a man and a goddess.

II

Chand had six sons. Within a year these six sons died one by one: this was the act of Manasa whose anger Chand had incurred. Great wail arose in the household. The palatial home of Chand which was alive with the playful activities of children now wore a gloomy look—it was now silent like a grave.

The suffering of Sanaka, the wife of Chand, was the greatest. How could a mother's heart bear the death of six sons and that in quick succession in the course of a year! Day and night she was in tears. She pleaded with her husband to give up the quarrel with the deity. How could a man cope with a goddess in a quarrel? She earnestly prayed to Chand to agree to offer worship to Manasa. But Chand would not listen to any counsel.

Finding it hard to stay in a home which was so desolate, Chand set out on a mercantile expedition. He thought, that would give his mind a relaxation from the heavy strain which it was undergoing. With seven big sailing ships full of merchandise Chand-Sadagar started. There were hundreds of sailors, attendants and servants in the ships. It was a huge affair. Innumerable persons came to witness the sight, as the ships left the shore. But as soon as the ships were on the high sea, a gale arose. Roaring waves dashed furiously against the ships, which tossed up and down, till all of them sank with every thing they carried. Chand knew it was another vile act of Manasa. He strove hard for his life and at last succeeded in swimming across to the shore.

Shivering with cold, tired, jaded and hungry, stripped of all his clothings, he did not know where to go. Nor could he realize where he was. But he was not daunted—for was he not a devotee of the

all-powerful Shiva? He went to the village near-by, and strangely enough he found that his friend Chandraketu lived there. Naturally his friend received him with warm arms—especially as he was in such a distressed condition. Chandraketu at once clothed him well and prepared a feast for him. As Chand-Sadagar sat for the dinner, in course of conversation, it transpired that his friend was a devotee of Manasa. This startled him—infuriated him, he would not touch food at a house where his sworn enemy, Manasa, was worshipped. He left the house immediately without even touching the food.

But Manasa did not leave him there. Her evil eyes followed him wherever he went. Misery dogged his footsteps but his faith in Shiva kept up his spirits.

After many months of sufferings, Chand at last reached his home. All people of the city of Champaka felt sorry for him, when they learnt of all his bitter experiences. They did not know how to sympathize with him sufficiently. But with all their endeavour they failed to persuade him to change his attitude towards Manasa.

III

Time rolled on. The house of Chand-Sadagar again lit up with the smile of a new-born babe—a son, whom they named Lakshmindra (lit. Lord of Lakshmi, the goddess of Fortune), but usually afterwards would call by a shortened name Lakhai. The news of the birth of Lakhai was received in the city of Champaka with mixed feelings. For as the people were glad at the birth of a son to their dear Chand-Sadagar, they were also anxious as to what would be the future fate of the child. Had not the six sons of Chand succumbed to the anger of Manasa?

Sanaka tried to forget her bereavement of the six children, by looking at

the face of Lakhai. Lakhai was so beautiful in appearance and withal so bright and intelligent that he became the darling of the whole of Champaka. This added to the joy of the mother, but the father became outwardly indifferent to the son. The fact was, an astrologer told Chand that Lakhai would die from a snake-bite on the night of his marriage. This prophecy disturbed the peace of Chand day and night, and he did not like to have any attachment for the son. But all the same his love for him was too intense, and incessantly he prayed to Shiva for help to avert the destiny of Lakhai.

As the boy grew up, Sanaka, who did not know the prophecy of the astrologer, pressed her husband hard to arrange for the marriage of the son. But seeing the utter indifference of Chand in this matter, one day Sanaka burst into tears and accused her husband of having no love for the only son they had. At last Chand-Sadagar yielded. All the prophecies of astrologers do not come true. Who knows if the astrologer did not commit a mistake in his calculation as regards the future of Lakhai!

But Chand-Sadagar took sufficient precautions. He built a special house—of iron, on a hill top and made it impregnable against snakes. But poor Chand did not know that the mason, at the threat of Manasa, kept a hole in the building through which a snake could enter.

The bride selected belonged to a neighbouring village. Her name was Behula. Even in her young age Behula attracted the attention of the whole village. For, God showered, as it were, all accomplishments on her. She was so beautiful that she was often mistaken for a heavenly being. She excelled beyond expectation in household duties. She had a tender heart which felt for any person fallen in misery. She would be found

by the side of a patient suffering from a fell disease, she would invariably go to wipe off the tears of a widow who was mourning the loss of her husband. Behula was a mere child, but nevertheless the old and the young found solace and peace from her very presence. But now and then Behula would become absorbed in her own thoughts. Then she would have a far-away look, her body would be still as marble, and people would not dare approach her.

When the marriage of Lakhai with Behula had been performed, Chand broke the prediction about Lakhai to the father of the bride. At this the latter grew anxious and became upset, but Behula was calm and grave : she wanted to face the situation boldly.

When Behula entered the portals of the house specially built to avert the dreaded catastrophe, a shiver ran through her body. Would she be able to save and protect her husband? Soon she summoned up courage. It was but the question of one night. The prediction was, 'Lakhai would die from snake-bite on the night of his marriage.' Well, it could be easily prevented. Behula thought she would sit up the whole night so that no snake could approach her husband.

Lakhai, who knew nothing of the prophecy, was fast asleep, but Behula kept awake, keenly watching the room. It was midnight. Everything was still. But the very silence pressed heavily on the heart of Behula. She had no peace of mind. She counted the hours by the minutes—if she could protect her husband for some more hours, the prediction would prove false. She was determined to falsify the prophecy.

It was towards dawn. Behula was tired. Anxiety made her exhausted more than the wakefulness. In an unguarded moment she closed her eyelids—she became asleep. But it was not

long. She woke up suddenly, disturbed by a bad dream. She looked all round. She felt sorry and ashamed that she had fallen asleep. Lo! there something going away through a small hole in that corner. Exactly at that time Lakhai gave a low scream, just awake from his sleep. But before he could utter anything, it was all over. Lakhai was bitten by a dreadful snake, and instantaneous death was the result. Behula was overwhelmed with grief. She did not know whether to curse her fate or curse herself. Why did she fall asleep? Oh, the evil hour when she lost control over herself!

IV

In dreadful suspense, next morning, the whole city of Champaka came to the residence of Lakhai to know what had been his fate. But before the door of the room was opened, from the sobbing inside they knew that the fate could not be averted—Lakhai could not be saved.

When the whole situation was revealed, Chand felt exasperated, Sanaka became bewildered. The news spread like wild fire, and wherever it went people were overcast with sorrow, for greatly did Lakhai win the heart of all.

Amidst the gloom that spread over the house of Chand, there was a fresh trouble. Behula would not agree that her husband should be cremated. She proposed that the dead body should be put on a raft and allowed to drift in the river and she also would accompany the dead body. This was a strange proposal. It meant that they were to lose both Lakhai and Behula. This idea upset Sanaka more than anybody else. But Behula insisted to have her way.

The raft was on the middle of the river, carrying the dead body of Lakhai and with Behula sitting by. As the raft began to go down the stream, carried by the current and tossed by the waves,

people thronged on both sides of the river. They began to pray to Behula to come back—for they could not bear such a heart-rending sight. But Behula was silent, calm and determined. She must save her husband—though she did not know how.

Slowly the raft passed out of sight. People strained their eyes to have even a faint view of Behula—who resembled Sita in her devotion to husband—but she could be seen no more. Gradually they returned home, but the sight they had witnessed haunted their memory day and night.

Sanaka was carried home back. But she could not stand the shock of this bereavement. Almost always she was in a fainting fit. The short time she was in a normal condition, she would weep uttering the name of Lakhai or Behula.

Chand appeared to have gone mad. He no longer looked to the household duties. Most of his time would be spent in the deep forest in a neighbouring hill. He could not bear the presence of any person. He wanted to be left alone. He was restless. Now he would sit and meditate on Shiva, then he would loudly repeat the name of his dear Lord, and some time he would wander aimlessly in the deep forest. At times he would hear, as it were, the voice of Lakhai in the breath of the wind, and then he would feel distracted and lacerated.

V

Days and nights passed. The raft went on drifting. Villages after villages came on the scene and went out of sight. Passing boats would look astonishingly at the raft, carrying as if a goddess on it; people on the bank seeing Behula from a distance recalled the rumour which travelled to their parts, that in Champaka a girl wife was consigned to the river along with the dead body of her husband. But Behula was oblivious

of everything that went round her. Her whole attention was to protect the dead body of Lakhai. Some time sharks and crocodiles came gaping, and she would hold the corpse on her bosom. Some time the putrid smell of the dead body attracted fish; Behula would drive them away with her hands. But Behula could not prevent the putrefaction of the body of her husband. As days passed, the dead body became only a mere bundle of bones. But these were a great treasure to Behula; she hugged them to her bosom.

And Behula herself was reduced to a skeleton. She looked like a thin wasted spectre of her former self. Who could then recognize her to be that girl who once brought down the very heaven, as it were, to her village home?

Many visions passed over the minds of Behula. Some time they were terrifying, Behula would quake with fear. Some time she would see pictures of happy homes alive with the laughter of joyous children, that would make her grief all the more poignant. Some time she would hear the voice of someone who was trying to dissuade her from her purpose. But amidst all these trials Behula was firm.

In this way some months passed, and the raft struck against the ground near a bathing ghat. There Behula found a washer-woman cleansing clothes. The lady was all attention to her work, she took no notice of the raft, though it was there for some hours. One strange incident struck Behula. The lady had a child which disturbed her in her work. She throttled the child to death and quietly began to beat her clothes. Clothes became milk-white. As the evening drew nigh, the lady sprinkled some water on the dead body of her child which at once came back to life. Then carrying the child on her back along with the bundle of clothes, she flew

through the air and soon became out of sight. The next morning the lady came back with her child and a bundle of clothes, killed the child, washed her clothes and in the evening disappeared with her revived child. Behula watched all these things. In the next morning as the lady was going away, Behula flung herself at her feet, with the thought that the lady might give her a clue as to how to bring back her husband to life.

At first the washer-woman treated Behula very coldly, but as Behula repeated her entreaties, the lady became tender. She told Behula to accompany her to heaven and gave her the information that Shiva was pleased with her devotion.

Carrying the remnants of the dead body of her husband, Behula accompanied the washer-woman to heaven, and she was ushered into the court of Indra, the god of gods. There were assembled Brahmâ—the creator of the world, Vishnu—the protector of creation, Shiva—who was easily pleased, Kubera—the god of wealth, and others. Before that vast assembly, bathed in tears Behula prayed for the life of her husband.

The gods were pleased with the devotion of Behula to her husband but they insisted that Behula should sing a song before her prayer could be considered. So many trials Behula had stood, but the present one was much greater than any she had experienced in the past. She was consumed with grief and a more wretched condition could not be conceived of than what she was in. This was not the state of mind in which one could sing! What a heart-rending proposal!

But not to comply with the request meant losing the chance of getting back the life of her husband. Behula steeled her heart, suppressed her feelings, and sang a song. The song

had such a soft melodious tune, that it brought tears to the eyes of all those assembled there.

Then the gods said to Behula, 'We are extremely pleased with you. We have watched your great devotion to your husband. The seemingly cruel proposal of asking you to sing was only to test further your love for your husband. You have stood all the trials, and you will get back the life of your husband.'

But now came forward Manasa with a list of her grievances against Chand-Sadagar—how he had treated her with contumely and so on. How could she give back the life of his son? This made everybody silent in that big assembly. Behula was in a great suspense—was she going to lose the boon which she had earned with so much hardship and suffering? Shiva, whose great heart felt for all, came to save the situation. He thought of his devotee Chand, he appreciated the intense devotion of Behula to her husband, and he also sympathized with the lot of Manasa. So he promised that he would see to it that thenceforward Chand offered worship to Manasa. Thereupon Manasa readily agreed to give back the life of Lakhai. At this happy solution all the gods rejoiced, Behula got back, as it were, her own life. But there was something more. How could Behula return to Sanaka, her mother-in-law—with only her own husband brought back to life? Sanaka lost her other six sons also? She mourned their loss no less. So Behula prayed that all the losses that Chand had suffered from the wrath of Manasa should be redeemed. The gods saw the reasonableness of her argument and supported Behula. Manasa agreed, but on the condition that she would again take back what she was giving, if Chand did not submit to her.

Soon came Lakhai back to life. So did all his brothers. The seven sailing

ships of Chand which were destroyed were now returned to Behula, with all their commodities. Lakhai started for Champaka with all these. How great was the joy of all the brothers when they met one another again. They were dreaming of the happy days that lay ahead—how greatly their mother would rejoice when they would reach Champaka; how intense would be the joy of their old friends, relations and associates to meet them, and so on. But Behula could not participate in their joys fully. There were marks of anxiety on her face. Who knows whether her father-in-law would agree to worship Manasa? If he did not, then she would lose everything she had got. So the trial was not over.

The party reached Champaka. The news travelled to Sanaka and all the people of the city, who rushed to the spot. They could hardly believe their eyes when they saw all the seven sons of Chand brought back to life. But none of the brothers would get down from the boat. Behula gave out to her mother-in-law the condition on which Manasa gave back the life of her husband and others. If that condition were not fulfilled, they all would go away. This piece of news was hardly a source of joy to Sanaka, who knew well the attitude of her husband towards Manasa.

VI

Chand passed his days in the forest in hard asceticism to please Shiva. One day he saw a monk approach him. In the course of the conversation, the monk ridiculed the ascetic practices of Chand as being another form of egotism and self-conceit. As Chand protested, the monk told Chand that his quarrel with Manasa was the clear indication of his pride. So long as there was pride in any form, so long as there was hatred against anybody, one could not realize

Truth however hard might be one's asceticism. These stray remarks changed the whole outlook of Chand, he saw the vision of a new world before him. But how could this monk know what had happened between him and Manasa?—Chand pondered in great astonishment. But before the shock of surprise was over, Chand saw that the monk had disappeared, and he heard a voice which said that Shiva and Manasa were but the different aspects of the same entity and Chand was wrong in differentiating one from the other.

Now that his self-conceit and pride gave place to humility, Chand easily and clearly saw his mistake and he had no longer any objection to worship Manasa. With the resolve to offer the same devotion to Manasa as he had given to Shiva, Chand was returning home, when he heard the news about the achievement of Behula.

He went directly to the river-bank, received his seven sons and the blessed daughter-in-law—a heavenly gift—and all together performed the worship of Manasa amidst great joy and festivity.

VII

There are some persons who do not feel comfortable at the happiness of others. So, as rejoicing went on at the house of Chand, one from the assembled guests raised the objection: 'Behula cannot be taken back to the family. For so many days she had been nobody knows where. She must pass through a test—she will have to walk over fire, as did Sita in days of yore, in order to prove her innocence. If such restrictions are not observed, the social order will be upset.'

There were persons to support even this man, but the saner people got startled to hear such words. To doubt the innocence of Behula whose very presence was a blessing to humanity?

Blasphemy could not go further. As furious controversy went on with regard to this topic, Behula came out before the public, shaking off her usual shyness. She said: 'The dream of my life is over. I wanted back the life of my husband, and I have got that. If you have any objection to accepting me, I make the path clear for you. Let me take leave of you.'

Scarcely had these words been finished

when the people saw Lakhai and Behula going up to heaven through the air. Only their dead bodies were left behind.

Lakhai and Behula were heavenly beings who were born on earth to redeem a curse which fell on them. Now that it was done, they could no longer be in the mortal world.

But from that time on people began to worship Shiva and Manasa with equal devotion.

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

Even while he was in the midst of his arduous labours in the West, Swami Vivekananda realized that a more important work was awaiting him in India. The soul of the nation was to be roused to a sense of its own worth. Forgotten values of life were to be brought back to light. Religion was to be made a living force which will strengthen the people and lead them to realize the fullness of life. When the great leader returned to the motherland and made his triumphal tour from Colombo to Almora, it was in the city of Madras that he first intimated to eager listeners his plan of campaign. There was great enthusiasm and a genuine desire on the part of the people to learn more of the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsadeva. Some of the citizens approached Swami Vivekananda with the request that he should kindly send one of his brother disciples to stay in Madras and establish a monastery which would become the centre of the religious teaching and philanthropic activities outlined by the Swami in his addresses delivered in India and abroad. By way of reply Swami Vivekananda said, 'I shall send you one who is more orthodox than your most orthodox men

of the South and who is at the same time unique and unsurpassed in his worship and meditation of God.' The very next steamer from Calcutta brought to Madras Swami Ramakrishnananda and Swami Sadananda to assist him in the work.

In a few words the leader has summarized the individual characteristics of the apostle in relation to the field of work for which he was chosen. South India has been all along the stronghold of orthodox Hinduism. When Buddhism in the days of its decadence upset the ancient religion and made men lose faith in the Eternal Dharma, it was the Alvars, the Nayanmars and Acharyas of the South who gave new vigour to the religion of the Rishis. Again when foreign invasions disturbed the practice of the old religion, it was South India that closely guarded the sacred Vedic fire and passed it on to others when the opportune time came. To infuse new life into the ancient religion without breaking the continuity of the tradition, the apostle to the South had to be a person of great intellectual attainments, of unflinching devotion to the ideal and deep reverence for the forms of worship and religious practices sanctified by the

authority of a succession of great teachers. Swami Ramakrishnananda possessed all these and in addition he had an overflowing kindness, abounding sympathy for all and a childlike nature which exhibited the inner purity of the soul.

Sashibhushan Chakravarti—that was the name by which Swami Ramakrishnananda was known in his pre-monastic days—was born in an orthodox Brahmin family of the Hooghly district, Bengal, in the year 1863. The father, a strict observer of religious traditions and a devout worshipper of the Divine Mother, gave the early training that laid the foundation of the lofty character exhibited in the life of his great son. We can form an idea of that early training from the Swami's own utterances regarding the upbringing of children. We quote the following from his lecture on 'How to be a Real Master.' 'Since it is our nature to rule, it is always better to give this nature full scope to develop itself, to evolve masters and not slaves out of ourselves. It will be my duty to point out to you how that can be effected. From our very childhood we hate restraint. No conventionalism, no formality, no etiquette, no manner can bind a child. The children of the world profess no religion, admit no restrictions and therefore have no caste; they are all of the same caste for their characters are always and everywhere the same. Now the question is, should we leave our children do whatever they like, for by so doing we give them perfect liberty and thus virtually make them masters and not slaves to others? A human child is the most forlorn and helpless creature on this earth, and so if it is allowed to be left alone to itself to do whatever it likes, is there any doubt that it will be kicked out of existence by those

enemies, ever on the alert to work woe—enemies such as ignorance, hunger, thirst, cold, heat, physical and mental weakness, diseases and lots of other things? When a child is incessantly under the gaze of all these evil-doers, and when it is itself unable to resist them, it is our duty to keep it in a place beyond their reach. When a plant is very young we put a fence round it to save it from being pulled out by mischievous urchins or by cattle. So we should limit the liberty of a child, to prevent its falling a prey to the enemies mentioned above. This is the reason why a boy should be made to go through a course of strict discipline before he is allowed to have any liberty and as he proves stronger gradually, under such discipline, we can give him liberty more and more, little by little. When he is strong enough to resist all evils, to hold his own ground against all temptations and promptings of nature, he should be allowed full liberty.'

Again in his lecture on 'Religious Education' the Swami observes as follows: 'Should the children be given undue liberty? A child's mind is always after play, is always after trifling things; and if you allow him full liberty he will grow up to be a shallow man, in no way different from an animal, merely eating and drinking, playing and sleeping. A human child is intended for higher things than these. We should make a god out of him and not a beast.' We have quoted at length from the Swami's lectures to bring out in bold relief an outstanding characteristic of his life. The traditional wisdom inherited through generations makes the Brahmin father realize his duties towards his son. The Brahminic ideal of life based upon the control of the mind and the senses, austerity, purity, forbearance and such other

virtues demands that from the earliest age the child should be made to go through a course of discipline, a discipline that would bring out the god in him and make him achieve self-mastery. The daily bath at the stated hour, the duties in the household and in the worship-room, the restraint in speech and behaviour, and other details to be strictly observed by the growing boy gradually build up his character and give him that mastery over himself which leads him to the attainment of the higher values of life. As we already stated above Sashibhushan was born in an orthodox Brahmin family and his father was a strict observer of religious traditions and a devout worshipper of the Divine Mother. Sashi inherited these and later on perfected his character under the guidance of his Great Master.

Now to resume our narrative, Sashibhushan went to school and having successfully completed the school course entered college. He was a brilliant student at college and his favourite subject was mathematics. He and his cousin Saratchandra came under the influence of the Brahmo Samaj. Sashi became intimately known to the Brahmo leader, Keshab Chandra Sen and was appointed private tutor to his sons.

At this time Sri Ramakrishna was closely known to many members of the Brahmo Samaj. In order to enjoy the company of the saint the members resolved to celebrate their anniversary at Dakshineswar. This event took place on a certain day in October, 1883. Sashi and Sarat arrived at Dakshineswar and along with a few other boy-companions went to see the Master. They found him seated on the small bedstead in his room. Sri Ramakrishna received them with a smile, asked them their names, inquired

where they lived and was pleased to hear that they belonged to Keshab's Brahmo Samaj. Sashi was then reading in the F. A. class and the others were all preparing for the matriculation. As Sashi was the eldest of the band, the conversation was addressed to him. The Master spoke of early marriage and its attendant evils. He pointed out how the responsibility to maintain a family was thrust upon boys far too early, even before they completed their education. Then he spoke of the necessity of a strong spiritual foundation for realizing the true end of life. He said, 'Bricks and tiles, if burnt after the trade mark has been stamped on them, retain these marks for ever. Similarly you should be stamped with spirituality before entering the world. Then you will not become attached.' 'Then, sir, is it wrong to marry? Is it against the will of God?' asked one of the boys. Sri Ramakrishna had a book taken down from the shelf and pointing to two passages asked the boy 'to read them aloud. The first passage (St. Matthew XIX.12) gave Christ's opinion on marriage: 'For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.' The second passage was from St. Paul (I Corinthians VII. 8, 9). It read: 'I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.' When the passage was read, Sri Ramakrishna remarked that marriage was the root of all bondage. He then asked Sashi whether he believed in God with form

or without form. The boy frankly answered that as he was not certain about the very existence of God, he was not able to speak one way or other. The reply pleased the Master very much. Sashi and Sarat were fascinated by the personality of Sri Ramakrishna. They made the Master the pole-star of their life.

Of Sashi and Sarat Sri Ramakrishna used to say that both of them were the followers of Jesus the Christ in a former incarnation. Were they James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who are so often mentioned as next only to Simon Peter, the chief apostle? Whatever that might be, subsequent events show that both the cousins Sashi and Sarat became pillars of the Order and the great philanthropic organization founded in the name of the Master.

Slowly and silently Sashi was progressing in the life of the Spirit. His keen intellect, robust physique, and steady character were beginning to centre round the one grand theme of God-realization. Let us record one little incident which bears testimony to Sashi's character as the ideal disciple. One day it happened that he was busily engaged in studying some Persian books in order to read the Sufi poets in the original. The Master called him thrice before he heard. When he came, Sri Ramakrishna asked him what he had been doing. Sashi told that he was engaged with his books. Sri Ramakrishna quietly remarked, 'If you forget your duties for the sake of study, you will lose all your devotion.' Sashi understood. He took the Persian books and threw them into the Ganges.

Sashi was now in the Final B. A. class; the examination was fast approaching. But at that very time Sri Ramakrishna was lying ill in Cossipore Gardens. The young disciple had to decide between his studies and

service to the person of the Master. Unhesitatingly Sashi decided to renounce his possible career as a man of the world for ever and give his body, mind and soul wholly and unreservedly to the service of the Master. He and the other disciples served the Master day and night. The illness of the Master became the means of bringing the disciples closer together. In those memorable days, the Master's conversation and his frequent soaring beyond the world of the senses in Samadhi gave the disciples a closer communion with the personality of the Master and served, as it were, the means for passing on to the disciples the spiritual realizations of the Master. Hour after hour the disciples attended to the Master. All too suddenly the day of consummation came. Let us listen to Sashi's own words and try to visualize the final scene in the divine drama.

'When Sri Ramakrishna gave up his body did he feel any pain? On the contrary I think that was the most blissful moment of his life, for there was horripilation all over his body. I myself saw it. Every hair stood up on end. He never really felt much pain. He never lost his cheerfulness. He used to say that he was all well and happy, only there was a little something here (pointing to the throat). On that last night he was talking with us to the very last . . . I remember every incident of that last day. He seemed very well and cheerful. In the afternoon he talked for fully two hours to a gentleman who had come to put him some questions about Yoga. A little later I ran some seven miles to bring the doctor. When I reached his house, he was not there, but I was told that he was at a certain house. So I ran another mile and I met him on the way. He did not want to come but I dragged him away just the same. He

gave Sri Ramakrishna some medicine saying: "I am sure this will cure you," and Sri Ramakrishna scolded his Mother a little saying, "How long shall I have to take this Uchchishtam?"

'We all thought he was very well because he ate so much more supper than usual, and he said nothing of going. In the afternoon he had asked Yogin to look in the almanac and see whether it was an auspicious day and Yogin said that it was a very auspicious day. Also he had been telling us for sometime that the vessel which was floating in the ocean was already two-thirds full of water, soon the rest would fill up and it would plunge into the ocean. But we did not believe that he was really going.

'He asked us to fan him and some ten of us were all fanning at once. He was sitting up against some five or six pillows which were supported by my body and at the same time I too was fanning. This made a slight motion in the body and twice he asked me: "Why are you shaking?" As if his mind were so fixed and steady that he could perceive the least motion. Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) took his feet and began to rub them and Sri Ramakrishna was talking to him, telling him what he must do. "Take care of these boys," he repeated again and again, as if he were putting them in his charge. Then he asked to lie down. Suddenly at one o'clock he fell towards

one side, there was a hoarse sound in the throat and I saw all the hairs stand on end. Swamiji laid the master's feet on a quilt and ran downstairs as if he could not bear it. A doctor, who was a great devotee and who was feeling his pulse, saw that it had stopped and began to weep aloud. "What are you doing, you fool?" I asked, meaning that he was acting as if Sri Ramakrishna had really left us. We all believed that it was only Samadhi, so Swamiji came back, and we all sat down, some twenty of us, and began repeating, "Hari Om! Hari Om!" all together. So we waited until between one or two the next day. Still the body had some heat in it, especially about the back, but the doctor insisted that the soul had left the body and about five it had grown cold, so we placed it on a very beautifully decorated cot and carried it to the cremation ground.'

The greatest trial was at the burning ghat. Feelings of a contrasting character visited the soul of Sashi. Now the joy and bliss the Master had shed over them all at the time of the Maha-Samadhi came over him and he sang the name of the Master in triumphant praise. Then a sense of utter loneliness stole over his joy and made him the victim to most violent grief. When the flames that had made ashes of the body of the Master had died out, amid the silence that prevailed, Sashi gathered the sacred relics.

(To be continued)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

The poet has passed away. 'Whither?' we ask. 'To the fields Elysian, to the realms of Everlasting Light' comes the answer. While on earth, he voyaged over all the seven seas. Wherever he went, he was acclaimed as an Immortal. This is his last voyage. He is homeward bound. The ship has set sail; the winds are favourable; he will safely reach port. There he will meet his compeers; the bards of all ages and climes. He came to us from the blessed realm of the Immortals bringing with him Joy and Light and Love. During his sojourn here, he distributed his gifts generously to all. Now at the journey's end, when he meets his Master, great will be his own joy. Looking forward to the day of meeting, the poet said,

'Once you had lent to my eyes
a generous portion from your limitless
store of light.

Now at the day's end, you have come
to reclaim it, my Master,
and I know for certain that I must
make good my debt.

'But why cast shadow before my evening lamp? I am but a guest for a few days in this world that has come out of your light, but if out of its abundance a few fragments of that light are left behind, let them remain in careless neglect at the last trace of your chariot.'

The light that he left behind will be ours for all time to come. The undying cadences of his music have made his mother-tongue a world-language. His advent has lent glory to this Motherland of ours. The immortal spirit of the Vedic Rishis spoke through him. The nations heard and wondered. In paying

their homage to India's glorious son, they bowed their heads in reverence before the footstool of the Great Mother.

A prince among men, worthy scion of a great and talented family, wherever he went he upheld the honour of India. India's joy was his joy; India's sorrow was his sorrow. When world's recognition first came in the shape of the Nobel Prize for Literature, some of his countrymen went on a deputation to meet the poet and offer him their felicitations. Among the men who were assembled before him, the poet saw many who had not read his works and studied his message. Urged by feelings of wounded love, he spoke out his mind and administered a dignified rebuke in the following terms: 'What brings you gentlemen, here to-day? You, whom I had failed to please so long, what have I done, pray now to please you so mightily? It is not my worth, but the recognition of the foreigner, that has evidently worked up this sudden outburst of appreciation. I thank you for your generosity: but excuse me please, if I refuse to get drunk with you over this gilded cup of foreign wine.' Again after the Punjab disturbances, feeling deeply for the sufferings of his countrymen, the poet decided to renounce his knight-hood. The following extract from his historic letter to the Viceroy written on this occasion shows one phase of his noble character: 'The very least that I can do for my country is to take all consequences upon myself in giving voice to the protest of the millions of my countrymen, surprised into a dumb anguish of terror. The time has come when badges of honour make our shame glaring in the incongruous context of

humiliation and I for my part wish to stand, shorn of all special distinctions, by the sides of those of my countrymen who, for their so-called insignificance are liable to suffer degradation not fit for human beings.'

His genius was many-sided. His collected works will fill several volumes. Very little of it has been translated into English, but that little has taken the English-knowing world by storm. Oxford, the most ancient seat of learning in Britain, recognizing the great merit of the poet conferred on him the Degree of Doctor of Literature *honoris causa*. A special convocation of Oxford University was held at Shantiniketan on the 7th day of August, 1940—we note that the honour from Oxford came, exactly one year before the poet's passing away. On the historic occasion of this special convocation, the Honourable Mr. Justice Henderson of Calcutta High Court, in the capacity of Public Orator read out the Latin address by the University of Oxford requesting Sir Maurice Gwyer to confer the degree. We extract the following from the English translation of the said address: 'You see in him a great scholar and a great artist, both in prose and in verse; one who has written poetry, romance, satire, history: who has left scarcely any field of literature untouched and has touched nothing that he has not adorned. How rarely has such richness of imagination been combined with such elegance of style! How astonishing is the range of his versatile genius, wisdom and laughter, terror and delight, the power of stirring our deepest emotions. And yet we are always conscious of his essential humanity, of a man who thinks nothing beneath his notice, if only it is concerned with mankind. You see in him a musician who seems to obey no rules and yet has invented a thousand new

melodies; a distinguished philosopher deeply versed in natural philosophy, in ethics and in theology and who has at the last achieved that complete serenity of mind sought by how many and won by how few. Yet all dedicated as he has been to those pursuits, he has not lived for himself alone; for deeming good education for the young the most venerable of all institutions he has been the founder and director of this famous Academy, whose purpose is by wise methods to inculcate among its students a love of pure learning. Let it also be said that he has not valued a sheltered life so far above the public good as to hold himself wholly aloof from the dust and heat of the world outside; for there have been times when he has not scorned to step down into the marketplace; when, if he thought that a wrong had been done he has not feared to challenge the British raj itself and the authority of its magistrates; and when he has boldly corrected the faults of his own fellow-citizens. What more can I say? Here before you is the myriad-minded poet and writer, the musician famous in his art, the philosopher proved both in word and deed, the fervent upholder of learning and sound doctrine, the ardent defender of public liberties, one who by the sanctity of his life and character has won for himself the praise of all mankind. And so with the unanimous approval of the Vice-Chancellor, the Doctors and the Masters of the University, I present to you a man most dear to all the Muses. Rabindranath Tagore, already a Nobel prizeman, in order that he may receive the laurel wreath of Oxford also and be admitted to the Degree of Doctor of Literature *honoris causa*.'

His contribution to the awakening of India is indeed very great. He revealed India to her sons and daughters. The whole of Asia listened to his words.

As in the days of the Buddhist missions of Emperor Ashoka, the currents of Indian thought spread over the whole of Asia. China and Japan, Iran and the East Indies once again remembered their cultural debt to India. He travelled to various countries in Europe and America and spread everywhere the eternal message of India and raised India in the estimation of those countries. He took part in Indian national movements and made his voice heard. He was deeply interested in education and founded the Shantiniketan for re-suscitating the national culture and giving it a new shape to suit the changed conditions of the present time.

On the 8th of May, 1941 his eightieth birthday was celebrated all over India and in several places abroad. On the 7th of August, 1941 he passed away from the scene of his earthly activities. Bengal has given birth to many illustrious sons who have brought glory to the Motherland; one by one they are passing away. Their labours are bearing fruit; very soon this country will take its place in the comity of nations. India will ever cherish the memory of Rabindranath Tagore.

SWAMI GANESHANANDA

Swami Ganeshanandaji attained Mahasamadhi at 1-45 A.M. on Saturday, the 26th of July, 1941 at the Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta. His brother-monks, his many friends and the large number of students who received their education with his help and guidance are stricken with grief at the untimely passing away of the Swami who was so dear to them. At the time of his demise he was only forty-four years old. Of these twenty-two were devoted to the service of the Mission.

After receiving the blessings of His Holiness, Srīmat Swami Brahmanandaji

Maharaj, the first President of the Ramakrishna Mission, Amiya Maharaj—as Swami Ganeshanandaji is lovingly known among his brothers, friends and pupils,—left for Madras in 1919. Returning in 1921, he started the Mission Centre in Sarisha (Diamond Harbour), Dist. 24 Parganas. For the last twenty years he devoted himself heart and soul to the development of the Centre. One Boys' Extended M. E. Agricultural School, one Girls' H. E. School, one Mixed U. P. School, a Charitable Dispensary, a Library, a Students' Home, an Inter-Schools Sports Association and a Literary Society are among the activities carried on by the Centre. All these institutions are focussed around the important work of rural uplift. The declared aim of the work is the formation of a happy group of model villages, rich in education, health and wealth. In ancient India, the villages were the centres of culture. Once again in a renascent India, the strength of the country will depend upon the strength of the villages. Reconstruction is indeed a large problem. All-renouncing monks are, in a way, the fittest persons to undertake the task. Fired with the strength born of conviction and faith in the words of the Guru, Swami Ganeshanandaji successfully translated into action some of the ideas propounded by Swami Vivekananda with reference to a nation-building system of education. 'Muscles of iron and nerves of steel' is one of the sayings of the great Hindu Monk of India. Swami Ganeshanandaji gave special attention to the health and physical well-being of the boys and girls under his charge. Besides outdoor games, pupils of the Sarisha schools have military and Swedish drill, dagger and Lathi play, Ju-jitsu and boxing under the guidance of experts. Pupils of both sexes

are made to read the daily papers and discuss current events. Various items of village welfare work are undertaken by the teachers and pupils.

In the midst of his regular duties the Swami always found time to nurse the sick, and convey words of consolation to the bereaved and the distressed. He made no distinction between high and low in showering his love and lending a helping hand. The barber, when he was on sick-bed, was sure of the Swami's visit to his humble dwelling. The cabman and bus-driver knew that the Swami always had a smile and a kind word for them. Poor students who

came to him for advice and help found in him a warm friend.

The Swami was a man of dynamic energy and irresistible personality. His courage and determination made him face dangers and difficulties without flinching in the least. Outwardly a strict disciplinarian, he had an exceptionally large and sympathetic heart, which swelled at the sorrows of others and urged him to help them with parental affection. His sincerity and enthusiasm were captivating, and with these he inspired his colleagues and associates and attracted them with his unbounded love.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

VIEWS AND REVIEWS OF SRI AUROBINDO. Published by Sri Aurobindo Library, 12, Kondichetty Street, Madras. Pp. 88. Price Re. 1.

Part One consists of four essays. 'The Needed Synthesis' pleads for the recovery of the fulness of life by effecting the unity of the love of the Bhakta and the knowledge of the Brahma-Jnani. The essay on 'Arya—its significance' gives a comprehensive account of the various meanings attached to the term and clearly shows that in its original use the word expressed not a difference of race, but a difference of culture. What exactly is meant by 'Meditation in Yoga' is elucidated in the third essay and the fourth treats of the 'Universal Consciousness.' Part Two consists of the reviews of Arthur Avalon's 'Hymns to the Goddess,' Mr. G. C. Gangoly's 'South Indian Bronze,' and 'Rupam,' Mr. H. G. Wells' 'God, the Invisible King,' and Mr. N. P. Subramania Iyer's 'Kalaprakasika—a Treatise on Astrology.' The views expressed on art, religion, literature and philosophy exhibit the author's vast erudition and keen critical insight. The book is neatly got-up.

THOUGHTS AND GLIMPSES OF SRI AUROBINDO. Published by The Arya Publishing House, 63, College Street, Calcutta, Pp. 41.

Contains a collection of Aphorisms, Thoughts and Glimpses. Some of these are the results of profound meditation and will lead the reader to ponder deeply over the eternal verities of existence.

HERACLITUS. BY SRI AUROBINDO. Published by the Arya Publishing House, 63, College Street, Calcutta. Pp. 70.

This essay originally appeared in the *Arya* as a criticism of Prof. Banade's book on the subject and now for the first time is brought out as a book. It shows how often the thought of Heraclitus is identical with the Vedic and the Vedantic. It contains much that is interesting in Vedic and Greek philosophy and students of philosophy will find the book very valuable.

BANKIM—TILAK—DAYANANDA. BY SRI AUROBINDO. Published by The Arya Publishing House, 63, College Street, Calcutta. Pp. 80.

The book opens with the text of the Bande Mataram song (original Bengali in Devanagari characters) and two translations, one in verse and one in prose. This is followed by the article on 'Rishi Bankim Chandra.' The author says, 'The hero, the Rishi, the saint are the natural fruits of our Indian soil; and there has been no age in which they have not been born.' Among

the Rishis of the latter age we have at last realized that we must include the name of the man who gave us the reviving Mantra which is creating a new India, the Mantra *Bande Mataram*.' Emphasis is laid upon Bankim, the seer and nation-builder, one of the makers of Modern India. Bankim shaped the Bengali language as a fit and satisfying medium of expression; he inspired an unerring vision of the moral strength necessary for complete self-sacrifice for the country and complete self-devotion to the work of its liberation, above all he gave the inspiring Mantra which is creating a new India. The article on 'Bal Gangadhar Tilak' was originally contributed as an introduction to the *Speeches and Writings of Tilak*. It gives a lucid account of the nation-building activities of the great patriot and closes with the sentence: 'Mr. Tilak's name stands already for history as a nation-builder, one of the half-dozen political personalities, memorable figures, representative men of the nation in this most critical period of India's destinies, a name to be remembered gratefully as long as the country has pride in its past and hope for its future.' The article on 'Dayananda' was originally contributed to the *Vedic Magazine*, 'It was Kathiawar that gave birth to this puissant renovator and new creator. And something of the very soul and temperament of that peculiar land entered into his spirit, something of Girnar and the rocks and hills, something of the voice and puissance of the sea that flings itself upon those coasts, something of that humanity which seems to be made of the virgin and unspoiled stuff of nature, fair and robust in body, instinct with a fresh and primal vigour, crude but in a developed nature capable of becoming a great force of genial creation He was not only plastic to the great hand of Nature, but asserted his

own right and power to use Life and Nature as plastic material. We can imagine his soul crying still to us without insufficient spring of manhood and action, "Be not content, O Indian, only to be infinitely and grow vaguely, but see what God intends thee to be, determine in the light of His inspiration to what thou shalt grow. Seeing, hew thee out of thyself, hew that out of Life. Be a thinker, but be also a doer; be a soul, but be also a man; be a servant of God, but be also a Master of Nature!" For this was what he himself was, a man with God in his soul, vision in his eyes and power in his hands to hew out of Life and image according to his vision. Hew is the right word. Granite himself, he smote out a shape of things with great blows as in granite.' These extracts will give some idea of the vigorous and inspiring style in which this and other articles in the book are written. Here is another extract bearing on another great leader: 'Vivekananda was a soul of puissance if ever there was one, a very lion among men, but the definite work which he has left behind is quite incommensurate with our impression of his creative might and energy. We perceive his influence still working gigantically, we know not well how, we know not well where, in something that is not yet formed, something leonine, grand, intuitive, upheaving that has entered the soul of India and we say, "Behold, Vivekananda still lives in the soul of his Mother and in the souls of her children." So it is with all. Not only are the men greater than their definite works, but their influence is so wide and formless that it has little relation to any formal work that they have left behind them.' The book closes with an article on 'Ramesh Chandra Dutt.' We heartily commend the book to all who are interested in the makers of Modern India.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE MAYAVATI HOSPITAL, REPORT FOR 1940

The Mayavati Charitable Hospital came into being as a sheer necessity—in fulfilment of the local needs. The condition of the villagers, *mostly ignorant and poor, is so helpless in times of disease and sickness

that even the stoniest of hearts will be moved to do something for them. The regular dispensary was opened in 1903. Since then it has been growing in size and importance. Now quite a large number of

patients come from a distance of even 50 or 60 miles, taking 4 or 5 days for the journey.

The hospital stands within the precincts of the Ashrama, and is in charge of a monastic member qualified for the task. There is also a medical graduate who was appointed to increase the efficiency of the work. Service is done in a spirit of worship, and as such irrespective of caste or creed.

In the hospital there are 13 regular beds, one extra bed being added this year. But sometimes we have to make arrangements for even 30 or more indoor patients—there is so great a rush for admission. People come from such a great distance and in such a helpless condition that anyhow they have to be accommodated.

The operation room is fitted with most up-to-date equipments and as such almost all kinds of operation can be done here. This has been a great boon to the people of this area. In the current year we have further increased the equipment of the hospital.

We have also got a small clinical laboratory, which is a rare thing in these parts. Now almost all kinds of medical help that one can expect in a city are available here.

There is arrangement for the amusement and recreation of the patients through a gramophone. There is also a small library for those who can read.

The following comparative chart will indicate the gradual evolution of the hospital.

Year	No. of Patients	
	Outdoor	Indoor
1915	1,173	...
1925	3,162	35
1930	5,014	208
1935	14,344	189
1940	14,312	286

The total number of patients relieved during the year at the Outdoor Dispensary was 14,312, of which 10,772 were new cases and 3,540 repeated cases. In the Indoor Hospital the total number treated was 286, of which 281 were cured and discharged, 11 were discharged otherwise, 36 were relieved, and 3 died.

RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1940

	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
<i>To Opening Balance :</i>						
Cash in hand ...	680	0	0			
With Central Bank of India, Ltd. (S. B. A/c.) ...	4,682	1	5			
				5,312	1	5
Subscriptions and Donations ...				1,133	0	0
Interest ...				4,180	12	0
Miscellaneous Receipts ...				73	12	0
*Advance from Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta ...				1,904	13	0
TOTAL ...				12,604	6	5

DISBURSEMENTS

Establishment ...	...	169	1	6
Medical Staff ...	...	1,567	0	9
Medicines and Instruments ...	...	1,005	13	0
Equipments and Furniture ...	...	191	9	9
Beddings, Clothings and Laundry Stationery, Printing and Postage ...	...	323	1	3
Repairs to Buildings ...	...	55	13	3
General Expenses ...	...	119	9	6
Miscellaneous Expenses ...	...	257	2	9
*Repayment of Advance from Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta ...	...	28	11	3
	...	1,904	13	0

Closing Balance :

Cash in hand ...	576	9	0			
With Central Bank of India, Ltd. (S. B. A/c.) ...	6,400	1	5			
				6,976	10	5
TOTAL ...				12,604	6	5

Examined and found correct.

N. C. CHAKRAVARTY & Co., R. A.,
Incorporated Accountants (London).

13th Feb., 1941.

We cordially thank all our donors, who by their continued support have made it possible for us to carry on this humanitarian work in such an out-of-the-way place.

And we hope we shall receive from them such support and help even in future.

All contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the undersigned.

SWAMI PAVITRANANDA,
President, Advaita Ashrama,
P.O. Mayavati, Dt. Almora, U. P.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, KHAR, BOMBAY

The report of the Ramakrishna Mission, Bombay, for the years 1938-1940, presents a brief account of its useful activities during the period, which may be classified as follows:

Missionary: Ever since the inception of the Centre in 1928, the Swamis have been popularizing the universal teachings of Vedanta by holding classes and lectures in the city and its suburbs as well as in different parts of the province and outside it. As many as 455 weekly religious classes were held and 122 occasional lectures were delivered during the period under review. The birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were duly celebrated when lectures and discourses on the lives and teachings of the great Masters were delivered.

Educational: The Ashrama has a free Reading Room and Library with nearly 3,284 books in it, which were largely utilized by the public. The Students' Home, con-

ducted by the Mission, accommodated 71 college students during the period under report. The special feature of the Home is its ideal surroundings and atmosphere that provides the students with facilities for building up their life and character.

Philanthropic: The Charitable Dispensary that was opened with the starting of the Centre, renders both homoeopathic and allopathic treatment to the needy public. A total number of 33,780 patients, of whom 13,164 were new and 20,516 repeated ones, was treated in 1940 as against 15,594 in 1938. The surgical cases treated in the three years were respectively 162, 384, and 714.

In October, 1940, the city of Bombay and the suburbs were overtaken by a cyclonic storm. The Mission gave immediate relief to the sufferers by helping them with corn, clothes, blankets, and also cash.

Present Needs: (1) Rs. 5,000/- for purchase of some up-to-date apparatus and appliances. (2) Rs. 25,000/- for acquiring a plot of land for the Students' Home.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, KANKHAL, HARDWAR

The Sevashrama is a hospital meant mainly for the poor of the country, irrespective of caste or creed. A short summary of its activities for the year 1940 is given below.

The Indoor Department contains 50 beds, but more patients were accommodated in times of epidemics, or during *Melas* when large number of pilgrims visits the place. The total number of indoor patients treated during 1940 was 1,205, of whom 1,085 were cured, 189 relieved, 44 died, and 27 were under treatment at the close of the year. The Outdoor Dispensary treated 20,848 patients, of whom 18,341 were repeated cases and 11,507 new ones. The daily average attendance in both the Departments together was 114.

The Ashrama has been conducting a Night School since 1918. The number of students

during the year was 180. Of these 88 were of the depressed classes including untouchables, 29 Muhammadans, 1 Sikh, and 12 high caste Hindus. For the convenience of students who could not attend the school at night day-classes were opened recently.

The Library of the Ashrama had, at the end of the year, a collection of 2,524 books. The number of books issued to the public came to 2,387.

The Sevashrama sends its earnest appeal for funds to meet its various needs, a few of which are mentioned below:

- (1) Rs. 20,000/- for a General ward.
- (2) Rs. 6,000/- for a Compound Wall.
- (3) Rs. 5,000/- for Repairs of buildings.
- (4) Rs. 6,000/- for Underground Drainage.
- (5) Rs. 6,000/- for Land and Building for the Night School.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, JALPAIGURI

The activities of the Ashrama for the year 1940 may be brought under the following heads:

Religious: Regular weekly classes were held in the Ashrama in which the scriptures were explained so as to bring out the true significance of religion and the fundamental unity that underlies all religions. Occasional lecturing tours also were undertaken by the Swamis to neighbouring places. The birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were duly celebrated. These were occasions when people of various creeds and faiths came together in mutual understanding.

Educational: 5 poor students were accommodated in the Ashrama and all their expenses were borne by it. There is a school for Harijan boys in which 21 students received their education during the year. The Library and Reading Room conducted

by the Ashrama were used largely by the local public.

Philanthropic: A total number of 22,977 poor patients, of whom 8,819 were new cases and 14,158 repeated ones, were treated in the Charitable Dispensary conducted by the Ashrama. The number of surgical cases was 25.

There is a Maternity Section run with the help of an experienced doctor and two trained midwives. 58 ante-natal and 196 post-natal cases were attended during the year. 6 poor children were supplied with milk and some others with warm clothings. Besides curative work, arrangements for preventive service also were made by organizing magic lantern lectures and distributing literature on maternity and child-welfare.

The Ashrama authorities appeal for funds for erecting a Temple and a Guest House and a Maternity Clinic.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, NARAYANGUNJ BRANCH

The Mission was started as early as 1903. A perusal of the report for the year 1940, a short account of which is given below, shows the steady growth of the institution from year to year to its present state of usefulness. The activities may be classified under the following heads:

Missionary: Regular classes were held in the Ashrama twice a week in which the universal principles of Vedanta were explained. The total number of classes during the year came to 100. Besides these, the Swami in charge of the Centre visited many places in the neighbouring districts and delivered as many as 25 lectures on various religious topics. The birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and many of his monastic disciples were duly celebrated and the Durga Puja was performed.

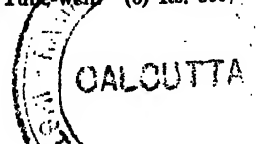
Educational: The Students' Home, started in 1938, is an ideal institution which looks after the physical, mental, and spiritual growth of its inmates. There were 32 students in the Home at the end of the year. Of these 28 were paying and 4 free. All the 8 students who appeared for the Matriculation Examination came out successful.

2 were placed in the first division, one securing 80 per cent marks in two subjects. As a part of their training the boys were taken on excursion to several places. Debates on various subjects were organized for their intellectual development.

The Mission conducts a Library which is open to the public. A Children's Section has been started as a branch of this Library. There is a Free Reading Room attached to the Library which is provided with many dailies, weeklies and monthly journals.

Charitable: The Homoeopathic Charitable Dispensary treated 7,446 patients during the year. Many poor and needy families were helped with regular doles of rice and pecuniary help was given to 35 persons. Besides these, a few pieces of new cloths were distributed among the needy.

Present Needs: (1) Rs. 45,000/- for acquisition of Land and construction of a Dormitory for the Students' Home. (2) Rs. 2,000/- for a Library Building. (3) Rs. 500/- for a Gymnasium. (4) Rs. 2,500/- for a Kitchen. (5) Rs. 500/- for a Tube-well. (6) Rs. 500/- for two Latrines.



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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

AT THE HOUSE OF MANOMOHAN

Saturday, 3rd Decem্বর, 1881.

The house of Srijut Manomohan is situated at 23, Simulia Street. It is in the neighbourhood of Surendra's house. The Master has come here at about 8 a.m. It is a small two-storied building with a small courtyard attached to it. The Master is seated in the parlour or the ground floor. It is a room situated just facing the lane. He is speaking with Ishan Mukherjee of Bhowanipore.

Ishan: ‘Why have you renounced the world? Of all the four stages of life, Grihasthashrama or a householder's life has been spoken of by the Shastras as the best.’

Sri Ramakrishna: ‘I do not trouble myself so much with what is good and what is bad. I do whatever the Lord makes me do, and say whatever He makes me say.’

Ishan: ‘It will be going against the will of God if all renounce the world.’

Sri Ramakrishna: ‘Why should all

renounce? And is it His will that all should live an animal life wallowing in lust and enjoyment? Can He not have any other wish? Have you known all about what He desires and what He does not?

‘You say that He wants everyone to live a householder's life. But why don't you perceive the will of God when your wife or children die or when, reduced to poverty, you are on the verge of starvation?’

‘Maya conceals from man the real wish of God. Through this Maya or the illusion-making power of the Lord the unreal appears as real and the real as unreal. The world is unreal; now it exists, but the next moment it may not; but through His Maya it appears as eternally real. It is due to this Maya that one feels that he is the agent and thinks that wife and children, brother and sister, father and mother, house and property, all belong to him.

‘There are two aspects of Maya—Vidya and Avidya. Avidya creates allurement, while Vidya that manifests

itself in knowledge, devotion and a desire for holy association, leads a man towards God.

'But *Viḍya* and *Avidya* lose their distinction to one who, through the grace of the Lord, has gone beyond the realm of *Maya*.

'A householder's life is beset with opportunities for enjoyment. But what is there in lust and wealth to enjoy? As soon as a sweetmeat has gone down the throat, one does not remember whether it was sour or sweet.

'But why should all renounce? Indeed how can one renounce unless the time ripens for it? The time for renunciation comes when one's desires for enjoyment have been exhausted. Can one renounce by dint of sheer force?'

'There is one type of dispassion which is as fickle as the nature of a monkey. People of a very low order are seen to practise it. Perhaps one is the son of a widow and his mother earns her livelihood by spinning. He had a job which he has lost and then he is seized with a spirit of dispassion. He puts on ochre robes and goes to Benares. After a time he writes to the mother saying that he has secured a job—pay rupees ten a month. He then tries to buy a gold ring and a fine dress even out of that scanty amount. How can he free himself from the desire for enjoyment?'

Keshab has come with many Brahmo devotees. The Master is seated in the courtyard. Keshab comes and bows down to him with great reverence. Keshab sits on the left side of Sri Ramakrishna while Ram is seated to the right.

The Bhagavata is being read for some time. After the reading is over the Master speaks. Devotees, who are all householders, are sitting all around the courtyard.

Sri Ramakrishna (to the devotees): 'It is very difficult to perform the duties

of a householder's life. If one goes whirling about oneself in great speed, one's head reels almost to a state of swoon. But there is no fear if one takes hold of a post or pillar and then whirls about it. Similarly, perform your duties, but without forgetting God.

'You may ask, "If it is so difficult, what is the way out?"' The way lies in repeated practices. In those parts (referring to Kamarpukur) I saw the carpenters' wives doing so many things at one and the same time. On the one hand, they stirred the flattened rice in the mortar of the *Dhenki*¹ the pestle of which might fall on their hands, and on the other hand, they suckled their children, and again at the same time bargained with their customers asking them to pay off their dues.

'An unchaste woman though performing all her household duties is all the while thinking of her lover.

'Of course, one has to undergo spiritual practices to attain to this state. One should retire now and then to solitude and pray. Work can be undertaken only after one has acquired devotion to the Lord. If you break open a jack-fruit the milky exudation of it will stick to your hands, but you will be free from the trouble if you smear the palms of your hands with oil beforehand.'

Now begins music in the courtyard. Gradually Srijut Trailokya also joins the singing.

Song: 'Glory unto the blissful Mother, who is identical with Brahman.'

The Master dances in joy. Keshab and other devotees also are dancing along with him. It is winter, but the Master is perspiring.

¹ A block of wood with a pestle fixed in it, used as a pedal for husking rice and other grains.

All resume their seats after the music. The Master asks for something to eat. Some sweetmeat is brought in a plate from inside the house. Keshab holds the plate and the Master eats. He holds again a glass of water and then wipes the Master's face with a towel. He then begins to fan him.

Sri Ramakrishna again starts the topic whether one can practise religion in a family life.

Sri Ramakrishna (to Keshab and others): 'They are indeed heroes who live in the world and yet call on Him. A heavy load presses on their head and yet they try to realize Him. They are brave souls indeed!

'You may argue that it is very difficult to practise. But what is impossible if the Lord showers His blessings! Even the impossible then becomes possible! When light comes to a room where there was darkness for a thousand years, does it come by slow degrees? It illumines the room all at once.'

Keshab and other householder devotees rejoice to hear these words of hope.

Keshab (to Rajendra Mitra, with a smile): 'It will be nice if you hold such a gathering in your house once.'

Rajendra: 'Well, I am quite ready. Ram, I entrust the work to you.'

Rajendra is the uncle of Ram and Manomohan.

The Master now goes to the inner apartment. He will take his meal there. Shyamasundari, the mother of Manomohan, has made all arrangements. The Master takes his seat. He smiles at the sight of various delicious dishes including sweetmeats. Says he, as he eats, 'So many things you have prepared for me!' A glass of ice-water also is there.

Keshab and other devotees are taking their meal in the courtyard. The Master comes down and supervises the serving. He sings humorous songs accompanied with dance to amuse them.

Now the Master starts for Dakshineswar. Keshab and other devotees conduct him to the carriage and take the dust of his feet.

'Common men talk "bagfuls" of religion but do not act even a "grain" of it. The wise man speaks little, even though his whole life is religion expressed in action.'

—Sri Ramakrishna

VIVEKANANDA

By RABINDRANATH TAGORE

[This short note was specially written for the *Prabuddha Bharata*, some years back. The English-rendering has been done by the Hon'ble Mr. Justice K. C. Sen, I.C.S.]

Vivekananda has said that there is the power of Brahman in every human being; also that it is through the poor and the dispossessed that Narayana seeks and awaits our service. What a grand Message! It lights up for man's consciousness the path to limitless liberation from the trammels and limitations of his self. This is no ethical injunction laying down any specific rule of conduct, no narrow commandment for the regulation of our behaviour. Opposition to untouchability is inherent in the Message—opposition not on any ground of political expediency, but because the Message is incompatible with insult to the humanity of Man, for untouchability is a self-inflicted insult to every one of us.

And because the Message of Vivekananda is a call of awakening to the totality of our Manhood, that it has set so many of our youths on diverse paths to freedom through Work and through Renunciation and Sacrifice.

विवेकानन्द

विवेकानन्द बलेद्विलेन, प्रत्येक मानुषेर मध्ये ब्रह्मेर शक्ति; बलेद्विलेन दरिद्रेर मध्ये दिये नारायण आमादेर सेवा पेटे चान। ए'के बलि वाणी। एह वाणी स्वार्थबोधेर सीमार बाहिर मानुषेर आत्मबोधके असीम मुक्ति पथ देखाले। ए तो कोन विशेष आचारेर उपदेश नय, व्यावहारिक सङ्कीर्ण अनुशासन नय। हुँतुमार्गेर विरुद्धता पर मध्ये आपनिह एते पढ़ेचे,— ता'र द्वारा राष्ट्रिक स्वातन्त्र्येर सुयोग ह'ते पारे ब'ले नय, ता'र द्वारा मानुषेर अपमान दूर हवे ब'ले, सेह अपमाने आमादेर प्रत्येकेर आत्मावमानना।

विवेकानन्देर एह वाणी सम्पूर्ण मानुषेर उद्बोधन ब'लेह कर्ममेर मध्ये दिये त्यागेर मध्ये दिये मुक्ति विचित्र पथे आमादेर युवकदेरके प्रवृत्त करेचे।

श्रीरवीन्द्रनाथ ठाकुर

फाल्गुन १३३५

CIVILIZATIONS, NEW AND OLD

Recently some prominent intellectuals of Bengal issued a manifesto calling for India's sympathy with Soviet Russia in this critical juncture of her history. The arguments adduced in the manifesto are mainly based upon the information supplied by the book on *Soviet Communism—a New Civilization* by Sydney and Beatrice Webb. The signatories have shown how within a little over two decades and in the face of stupendous odds, the common people of Russia have brought into being a new order that has banished poverty and unemployment, providing equal opportunity for all to acquire knowledge and apply it for the promotion of human welfare. Quoting the Webbs the manifesto says: 'The Soviet Union has set itself diligently, not merely to treat the "lesser breeds without the law" with equality, but recognizing that their backwardness was due to centuries of poverty, repression and enslavement has made it a leading feature of its policy to spend out of its common funds considerably more per head on its backward races, than on the superior ones, in education and social improvement, in industrial investments and agricultural reforms.' Thus on the testimony of two leading social investigators we learn that the economic and social life of Soviet Russia has been planned for the welfare of all and particularly of that section, the claims of which has hitherto been neglected. In the days of the Tsarist regime, the Church and the State appear to have joined hands in keeping the people in a condition of poverty, ignorance and enslavement, and it is quite comprehensible why there is a reaction against the old order and all that it stood for. The revolt against old theological conceptions

need not necessarily be a casting aside of the higher values of life. For we are told that the love of knowledge of the Soviet people has considerably increased and that Shakespeare and Einstein are revered more in Russia than in the lands of their birth. Further we are told that Soviet book-production at the end of the first Five-Year Plan was greater than that of England, Germany and Japan taken together. In the realm of international morality recent events have shown that the Soviet Union has strictly respected the plighted word and has proved herself to be a nation whose word can be trusted. The new civilization has so far justified its claim for consideration.

The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Archbishop of York extending their blessings to the alliance recently concluded between the British and the Russian people have unequivocally declared that the people of Britain should give unstinted support to Soviet Russia and help her to come out victorious from the titanic struggle in which she is engaged. Says the Primate, 'We must wish every success to the valiant Russian armies and people in their struggle and be ready to give them every possible assistance. It may seem strange to combine an alliance with Bolshevist Russia and the claim that we are contending for a Christian civilization, but such misgivings are really misplaced, for the first essential of the struggle is to overthrow the evil embodied in the rulers of Germany. A Nazi victory would destroy any tolerable form of Government and the Soviets are contending for the principles of national

freedom and independence.' His Grace the Archbishop of York says, 'We ought to have no misgivings as we unite with her (Russia) to resist the common enemy. And we may well hope that her union with us may lead to a withering and at least to a repudiation of her official godlessness.' Eminent leaders of a Christian civilization have weighed the merits of the ideologies of Communism and Fascism and have pronounced their verdict. Fascism stands for tyranny and the enslavement of nations, whereas Soviet Communism is contending for upholding the principles of national freedom and independence. Consequently it behoves Christendom to join hands with Communism to put down Fascism. Even before high church dignitaries and prominent intellectuals pronounced their learned opinion on this matter, the man in the street has sided Soviet Russia against Nazi Germany. In a street brawl when a bully meets with his equal the onlookers are happy. Men desire to see justice prevail. They range themselves against all forms of tyranny. This fundamental human instinct which civilization fosters and develops explains the universal dislike exhibited towards Fascist rule. Why then have civilized countries submitted themselves to the rule of the dictators? Germany is the birth-place of Protestant Christianity and Italy has been the seat of government of Roman Catholicism ever since the time of the Apostles. The submission of these countries to a form of government that is denounced as unchristian shows that economic and political causes may bring about changes in men's attitude towards the spiritual ideals that sustain civilization. But the ideals themselves are eternal and unchanging. The codes governing various nations may differ, even within the same nation they may differ from time to time. But law conceived as

the ideal that sustains human society belongs to the realm of eternal values.

* * *

We in India speak of Manu as our first law-giver. Probably Hammurabi of Babylon who lived four thousand years ago preceded our Manu. Lycurgus was the law-giver of Sparta and Numa Pompilius is reputed to be the law-giver of Rome. The making of constitutions and laws is such a specialized business that it requires the services of specialists. This fact must have made John Austin the English jurist to propound the theory that all laws properly so called are commands addressed by a human superior to a human inferior. Later authorities on jurisprudence have shown that Austin's theory is not correct. Laws are derived from immemorial usage and law-givers only codify them. These usages are again based upon fundamental human instincts as modified by environment. The spark of divinity that resides in the human heart is the final sanction for right and wrong. Probably civilization has run its course for ten thousand years and during this period the human race has been making experiments in corporate living by a system of trial and error. Leaders and law-givers may be considered to be the best embodiments of the corporate will of the communities in which they appear. A prophet may break the established conventions of the society that gives him birth, but the fact that thousands are ready to receive his message shows that deep down in the hearts of the people the conviction regarding the new message had already taken shape even before the advent of the prophet.

* * *

We speak of a Hindu civilization, an Islamic civilization, a Christian civilization, an old civilization, a new civilization and so on, in order to draw atten-

tion to some particular ideals which are emphasized by some civilizations more than by others. Those ideals need not by any means be original or unique to the said civilizations. There is nothing new under the sun. Communism was in the world millenniums before Lenin and Stalin thought of it. The same may be said of Fascism and all other *isms*. A few decades ago Western historians considered Greece as the very fountain-head of civilization. The Athens of Pericles with its beautiful statues, its immortal poetry and its bold philosophical speculations loomed large in the historian's horizon. The Hebrew civilization which also deeply influenced the West through Christianity was stern and austere with its monotheism and ethical rigidity. It had no gods and goddesses to give the necessary poetic touch to human behaviour. The Hebrew race suffered successive enslavements under Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria and Persia. In the midst of all trials and tribulations the race clung on to its tribal organizations, its caste regulations, its code of morals and its monotheistic religion. The heritage which it bequeathed to posterity and which has been broadcast over the earth by Christian propaganda contains much that is valuable for humanity. Greek and Hebrew cultures had a profound influence in shaping Western civilization. The Arab carried the torch of learning to the West and Greek and Roman culture exerted a further measure of influence through the channels of the new learning. But the European mind was not a mere *tabula rasa* in which Hellenism and Hebraism left the impress of their respective messages. The Norse legends and Icelandic Sagas show that the races of North Europe had a culture of their own at the time of their conversion to Christianity. Thus we come to the conclusion that the Christian civili-

zation of the West has been moulded into its present shape by many and varied influences. The original racial cultures formed the background, on which Latin Christianity as influenced by Hellenism and Hebraism painted the picture. But these two cultures which influenced Western thought have themselves been influenced by earlier civilizations. The labours of patient scholars during the last few decades have carried the story of civilization further back almost to its origin. Much work yet remains to be done in deciphering the records unearthed in the Sindh valley and Central Asia. The beginnings of Aryan culture and that of the Mongolian race is yet shrouded in mystery. The origin of Dravidian culture and its influence upon subsequent cultures has also not been worked out. Notwithstanding these, we of the present generation have the opportunity of evaluating the past with greater precision than those who preceded us. Such an opportunity, if properly utilized, is bound to make us more tolerant towards cultures other than our own.

* * *

Various nations such as the Sumerians, the Cretans, the Hittites, the Assyrians and the Babylonians, as well as the Phoenicians and the Egyptians have directly and indirectly contributed to the making of Hellenism and Hebraism. Contemporary with Sumerian civilization and connected with it, there existed a civilization in India, the remains of which have been unearthed in the Sindh valley. It is said to have connections with Dravidian culture which had also a living contact with the civilization of Egypt. The Mayan civilization that arose in Mexico, Peru and Yucatan is said to have connections with the civilizations of the Old World. The story goes further back to pre-

historic times to neolithic cultures from which the later cultures were derived. Surveying thus, we see that the mutual influence of cultures is so great that we can easily conceive of civilization as the common united venture of the human race as a whole. The art creations of all nations, their noblest thoughts, scientific inventions, philosophical speculations and all other spiritual effects are the common property of all mankind. The common elements we find among various cultures may be due to borrowing or spontaneous development under similar circumstances. The recrudescence of forgotten elements shows that values once secured are seldom lost. Hitler in adopting the Aryan Swastika and invoking the ancient gods of the Germanic race is probably trying to erase out from the lives of his people the Hebrew, Greek and Christian influences. That is an impossible task even for a dictator. The official godlessness of the Soviet Union is not different from the godlessness of France after the revolution. It may only be a passing phase. Religious cultures such as Buddhism positing no God have, nevertheless, profoundly influenced the course of civilization. What civilization is, how it arises, how it functions and such other questions may now be taken up for consideration.

* * *

Civilization is that concerted activity which men put forward to acquire the security and freedom necessary for achieving the higher values of life. These higher values are beauty, truth and goodness which in their social aspect express themselves as art, learning and conduct and in their super-social aspect as the Supreme Reality. In order to persist, civilization has to develop the necessary power to defend itself against external aggression and internal tyranny. This power may be

of two kinds; it may be the spiritual power that wins over the adversary and assimilates him in the body politic or it may be the material power that crushes and destroys the adversary. Both forms of power have their common origin in the faith that men possess in the ideals for which their civilization stands. That faith is necessarily spiritual in so far as it makes man to transcend the flesh and willingly lay down his life for the preservation of the ideals. When the faith in the ideal is intense it develops the fanatic zeal necessary for conquest and expansion; when it is moderate it is satisfied in defending its own; when it is weak it loses ground and succumbs to the onslaught of the adversary. When warm blood courses in the veins of men and they are truly enthusiastic to preserve their national ideals they promulgate laws to put down tyranny, whether this tyranny exists in the person of a king or in an oligarchic group that had risen to power by fair means or foul. If tyranny overrides the laws, men resort to direct action. The difference between effete and living civilizations, is determined by the extent to which the faith in its ideals inspires a nation to action. Excessive wealth corrupts the national soul, makes men cynical and often gives them a false sense of security based upon mere military strength. When the ideal is lost sight of, nations die. There may be battalions of soldiers and heaps of guns and heavy armaments, but if the men who constitute the civil authority lack the spiritual petrol, that supplies the true driving power soldiers and guns will be of no use. The fall of the Roman Empire of ancient times and the collapse of the French nation in contemporary history bear out the fact that battalions and armaments are worthless when the civil authority lacks the driving

power. Men lay down their lives for what they consider worth defending.

* * *

In order to acquire the security and freedom necessary for achieving the higher values of life any civilization worth the name takes effective steps to remove poverty, ignorance, injustice and tyranny. The citizens should have sufficient food to nourish their body and sufficient knowledge to understand the functions of civil government. Justice which is the bedrock of all corporate life should be upheld and the corporate will should be made sufficiently strong to check all forms of tyranny. After achieving these, the true function of civilization begins and that is the fostering of the higher values of life. First in order of development comes art which exerts a refining influence upon body, mind and soul. Civilization is certainly connected with cities. We gaze with wonder at the ruins of ancient cities which stand revealed to us by the labours of archaeologists. Mohenjo Daro and Harappa, Ur of the Chaldees, Susa and Nineveh, Gizeh and Luxor, Athens and Persepolis, Anghor Vat and Borobudur, Ajanta and Sigiriya, Amaravati and Isipatana, what dazzling visions of past glory do these names conjure up before the mind's eye. In dwelling houses and clothing, in household utensils and tools of everyday use, men expressed beauty with the same zeal that they manifested in the building of temples and royal palaces. The beautiful statues of Athens had for their models the finely-proportioned bodies of the Athenians. This fact shows that a truly artistic people regarded physical culture not as a means of piling up muscles but of acquiring well-proportioned bodies. Song and dance and festivals were also conceived as means of expressing the beautiful.

'Voluntary allegiance to the everlasting laws of beauty' brings joy to the human heart and raises life above the sordidness of mere materialism. It also provides passing glimpses of the spiritual realm, the true home of the soul. Beauty leads to truth. The poet has said that beauty is truth and truth is beauty. There is the truth achieved by higher wisdom and there is also the truth acquired by learning. By patient endeavour man takes possession of the lamp of learning. This reveals to him a wider world. He sees behind him the path which the race had travelled. The experience which past generations gathered slowly and painfully over a long period extending to thousands of years become his own in a marvellously short time. The magic lamp of learning brings before him true visions of untravelled countries, supplies him with accurate information regarding the customs and manners of fellow beings living in those distant regions, and lays bare before him their inmost thoughts, hopes and aspirations. It also helps him to peep into the future and by associating cause with effect prognosticate the course of future events. Learning brings in many other blessings and the civilized man takes steps to initiate the young into the mysteries of learning and entrust to them the heritage of the past. Along with the development of art and learning man learns the necessity of discipline and restraint to fill his place worthily. The significance of laws and morals and the need for carefully obeying their dictates in his dealings within his own community and also in his relationship with other communities become apparent to him. Man develops a code of ethics. Although these three phases of civilization are interconnected, it is possible to speak of civilizations as predominantly artistic, intellectual and ethical.

Art, learning and morals are indeed worthy achievements. But man's vision soars higher. He realizes the transitory nature of life on earth. Empires rise and fall. The spider spins its web over the ruins of the palaces of tyrants. The wise men of the race get glimpses of a life beyond. They realize the existence of a Supreme Reality and the possibility of communing with It. 'Lead us from the unreal to the real, lead us from darkness to light, lead us from death to immortality,' becomes their prayer. They develop ways and means for obtaining a vision of the Shining One, the source of all beauty, truth and goodness and also of establishing communion with that source. They address that Supreme Reality as father, mother, unfailing friend, the eternal law, the highest truth, the beloved and so forth, choosing the appellation in accordance with their particular method of approach. One among these wise men, a Vedic seer, who had the vision of God, proclaimed the good tidings in a trumpet voice saying: 'Hear, ye children of Immortal bliss! even ye that reside in higher spheres! I have found the Ancient One, who is beyond all darkness, all delusion; knowing Him alone you shall be saved from death over again.' With this proclamation religion was born. All art, learning and morals, all worship and philosophizing that went before were only a preparation for this happy consummation.

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Spiritual realization is the highest value of civilization. The civilization that stresses this supreme end is the highest type of civilization. A pre-eminently ethical civilization takes the second place. A civilization that has reached only up to the intellectual level and develops pure science considering it to be the highest possible adventure for the human spirit takes the third

place. As we have stated above art is the earliest civilizing influence, by itself it ranks below the other values mentioned above. But art soars higher, reveals itself in human conduct, and also becomes a means of spiritual realization; thereby its influence permeates through all stages of civilization. Those societies that do not stress these higher values but confine themselves only to money-making and strengthening their defences against external aggression are only candidates for civilization. In such societies men's native predatory instincts would stand revealed under the trappings of wealth and power. He that has risen above greed and covetousness has no necessity to erect a fence to guard his property from the possible depredations of his neighbour. He that has become truly non-violent need fear no violence at the hands of his neighbour. It is given to a few men to reach that height of non-violence and non-attachment to possessions. Society as it exists to-day can only survive by strengthening its defences against military aggression. A greater ethical development and more wide-spread spiritual realization may effect a true advance in civilization. China and India developed these characteristics at a very early period. But pressure of circumstances force even these nations to adopt a lower ideal. Compared to cosmic time the period during which the human race has occupied this planet is very short. Compared with that period the emergence of civilization is a very recent event. A great contemporary thinker has declared, 'Education is yet to be in the world, civilization has begun nowhere yet' (SWAMI VIVEKANANDA).

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Let us direct our attention to the writings and recorded utterances of Swami Vivekananda and gather some

of his thoughts concerning the basis of civilization. "True civilization should mean the power of taking the animal man out of his sense life by giving him visions and tastes of planes much higher and not external comforts" (Complete Works IV—230). "The highest type of civilization is found in him who has learnt to conquer self" (C. W. IV—196). "The more advanced a society or nation in spirituality the more is that society or nation civilized. No nation can be said to have become civilized only because it has succeeded in increasing the comforts of material life by bringing into use lots of machinery and things of that sort" (C. W. VI—417). "The European civilization may be likened to a piece of cloth, of which these are the materials: Its loom is a vast temperate hilly country on the seashore; its cotton a strong warlike mongrel race formed by the intermixture of various races; its warp is warfare in defence of one's self and one's religion. The one who wields the sword is great, and one who cannot, gives up his independence and lives under the protection of some warrior's sword. Its woof is commerce. The means to this civilization is the sword, its auxiliary—courage and strength, its aim—enjoyment here and hereafter" (C. W. V—435).

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Contemporary events clearly demonstrate to us the fact that Christianity has not succeeded in civilizing the Goths and the Vandals. They are out again laying hands on works of art and centres of learning. Beautiful buildings which were erected by the patient toil of many artistic hands are ruthlessly swept away by the destruction that rains from the air. A clergy that has strayed far away from Christ by worshipping the tinsels of power, indulging in the pleasures of the table and displaying its pomp in

brocaded raiment has lost the capacity to check the excesses committed in its presence and bring men back to God and to wisdom. Russia, a land of simple innocent peasants who were noted for their piety, the country of Tolstoy and Dostoievsky, has broken itself away from the Church of Christ. Mr. Bernard Shaw, after returning from a visit to Russia, is reported to have said that the whole anti-religious movement in Russia was an attack, not upon religion, but on priestcraft. We can understand the spirit of a people rebelling against the tyranny of the ruling classes and the priests. Very little news reach us from that country. We remember to have read in an American paper that a famine was raging in the country and the priests refused to part with their gold and valuables to relieve the suffering of the people and the civil authorities were forced to resort to sequestration. History tells us that such measures had been adopted in the past in other countries also, for less important reasons. It would be so good if ecclesiastical authorities of all countries refrain from denouncing the people and attempt to reform themselves. Religion becomes a civilizing power when it takes its stand upon spiritual realities. Then it is invincible. When it loses its spiritual power and identifies itself with vested interests, its day of reckoning may be said to be close at hand.

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The 'new' ideologies such as Fascism and Communism attempt a totalitarian control of the citizen's life promising to give him a new culture, a new religion and a new way of life. Statesmen and politicians may organize churches but cannot found religions, nor can they give new life to an old cult. This function is left to prophets and seers who have established a communion with the Deity. Priests who order their lives

in narrow conventional grooves and are intolerant to receive the spiritual treasures of faiths other than their own cannot also bring new life to their own religion. If civilization in the West is to survive the present welter of blood and confusion, the smouldering embers of spiritual life should be fanned into a flame which would consume the dross of sensual enjoyments and the mad rush for power. The West may borrow from the age-old civilizations of the East a little serenity, a little detachment and a true yearning for the higher values of life. Saints, poets and philosophers of all countries form the vanguard of civilization. The values upheld by them in their lives and utterances are the values

of a civilized life. Beauty, truth and goodness are much more real than gold and silver. The animals live in their senses for they know nothing further. It is open to man to rise higher and higher, to establish peace within, to love and to be loved, to do creative work that will bring unalloyed joy to his fellow beings, to comfort the distressed, to bring succour to the helpless, to be a blessing to himself and to others and above all to realize God and share in eternal life. It is the function of civilization to help man to achieve these true values of life.

MAYAVATI,
15 August 1941.

THE MEANING OF A UNIVERSITY

By Dr. D. N. Roy, M.A., Ph.D.

[Dr. Roy, formerly head of the department of philosophy in the University of the Philippines at Manila, Philippine Islands, traces in this paper the connection between democratic ideals and the ideals of higher education.—Ed.]

Like every other institution in a civilization, the university has its birth not in any fortuitous circumstances but in some group consciousness of the pressing needs for better life and better humanity. As this better life was originally conceived in an extra-mundane ideal the ancient universities were characterized primarily by an elaborate scheme of religious instruction which was considered almost the equivalent of education, while instruction on what were regarded as secular subjects came gradually to be associated with it. The universities, whether in ancient India or in medieval Europe, were not very dissimilar. Indeed they were much alike even in the matter of organization. They were more or less of the unitary residential type.

Students in their hundreds or even thousands came on foot from far and near, sometimes from hundreds of miles away, fired with an unbounded eagerness to live and study in the university. It was all for education, for learning at the feet of devout scholars who had seen the light and the path.

Higher education, which has always been the precious objective of a university and which meant in those olden days what aimed at the illumination and salvation of the soul, is not, however, so easily definable to-day. Human society and civilization have evolved now both in form and ideal to an immense degree of complexity giving rise to an ever-increasing number of problems. Education concerns itself with these problems and as such it has

correspondingly assumed a highly complex character.

The range of education has grown and is daily growing so incredibly vast that we do not know how many universities there are in the world that deal with it in all its known aspects. Yet the university consistently with its most extensive name should deal not only with every known aspect of education but also with the whole content of each aspect. This seems to be rather impossible from the very nature of it, inasmuch as it calls for such a huge expenditure of money and human energy that no people, however powerful and prosperous in men and money, would venture to launch upon such an educational utopia. It was not conceived even in the philosophic day-dream of the New Atlantic.

Nevertheless, man has not failed in his ambition to comprehend education in its widest extent. The famous American statesman and educationist Woodrow Wilson defined education to mean 'certain knowledge of all things and a specialized knowledge of one particular thing.' This definition has been popularly known, perhaps before Wilson, in a simpler language as 'to know something of everything and everything of something.' Only Wilson is quite discreet and careful to say 'a specialized knowledge of one particular thing' in place of 'everything of something.' But while this definition, be it popular or Wilsonian, is obviously imperfect in view of the fact that it identifies education with knowledge, I do not know if there is any university even in Wilson's own country that provides education in the sense he understands it. I believe there is none, because none is possible. Knowledge has become so vast both in depth and extent that to provide knowledge of 'all things'

seems too presumptuous an undertaking on the part of a single university.

The best European and American universities have provision, of course, for most, if not all, of the generally useful subjects of knowledge, but that is wholly different from providing education of the above kind. However, it is good to understand education even in that imperfect sense and to hold it as an ideal for a university to realize. That the best European and American universities eagerly follow that ideal may be guessed from their rapid growth and extension to cope with the daily increasing knowledge of things.

If none of our Indian universities has been able to fare as good as the best European and American universities, it hardly means that it does not appreciate education as highly as the latter. The problem lies elsewhere. It is mainly in the paucity of funds. There may be other minor circumstances which stand in their way to accelerate their growth and extension in the manner of the latter but these in a sense can probably be overcome.

In the present state of our Indian universities, whether they are teaching or affiliating or unitary or mixed, we cannot say that education is sought to be imparted there in the sense we have discussed. We cannot say that at least from the result which they show in preparing our youths. It is this result which may make one feel that perhaps by education is meant not 'to know something of everything and everything of something' but 'to know something of something, everything of nothing, and to make nothing of something that is known.' That this, unfortunately, is the case with us at present we cannot wholly deny. There are, of course, certain exceptional cases of our youths trained in some of our universities who have given a good account of their

education but that does not make any difference to the dismal general scene of our 'educated' youths chilling themselves to death in the icy cold of ignorance and inertia.

The truth is that our universities need the high idealism which inspires the European and American universities to collect and utilize all possible resources for the best preparation of the country's ambitious youths each of whom should be individually regarded as a sacred trust. That saves education from the danger of degenerating into any form of suppression or oppression. Education is the highest social value and the institution which consecrates itself to the full realization of this value cannot admit within its sacred precincts anything that befouls the very cause itself.

It is not absolutely necessary, however, that a good university must maintain the range of education as wide and varied as the best European and American universities. A poor country like India cannot meet the huge financial requirement for such a purpose. Historically studied a university is the result of the earnest desire of some public-spirited people to let the youths of the land prepare for the problems of life, individual, national and international. It is founded on the consciousness of local needs and interests. These local needs and interests, which are obviously limited, point to the nature and content of education with which the university is originally and specially concerned. They determine the subjects of education to be taken up in the university for specialized study. Though these subjects are limited in their number, it is necessary that there is adequate provision for each of them to be studied as thoroughly as the knowledge of the subject up to the present time is available. The number of special subjects does not matter so

much as the depth and extent of each subject studied do. If a university is said to be an institution of learning of the highest grade, it cannot do without providing for all available knowledge of a subject which it includes in its special studies. Other subjects than those that represent the vital and urgent local needs and interests may be gradually introduced, as conditions permit and as far as they become necessary to make the latter thorough and comprehensive. It is obvious that this plan makes for the realization of Wilson's definition of education—a specialized knowledge of something and some knowledge of other things. With the growth of the university, however, the importance of these other subjects also grows and one by one they are added to the group of subjects intended for specialized studies.

But even if there is adequate provision to make the content of higher education as rich as possible, the university may defeat its own purpose and ideal by not paying equal attention to what is known as educational method. Indeed many modern psychologists consider method even more important than the subject-matter. It is more important because those who enter the university to cultivate higher education are not unconscious passive objects to be dealt with, they are conscious active subjects responding to every stimulus that may present itself to them. The educational method has, therefore, the most important bearing upon the ways and manners of those who are engaged in the university to teach. When we remember that education is not something to be injected into the head of the pupil but something which he has to live by consciously acting and reacting to his mental content and physical environment we can easily imagine what great responsibility it is to be a teacher.

We all know how savage was the

method used in our educational institutions a few decades ago. Modern psychology has shown how it served only to kill the man in the pupil, while the teacher in those days thought he was just whipping the beast into a human being. The educational institutions in the West have given it up altogether by even having recourse to legal sanction where necessary. The pupil there is now a self-respecting and self-confident individual who is up to know what he is after. And there can be no question of any rudeness on the part of a university teacher whose relation is with grown-up youths. We cannot say, however, that school education in our country has undergone any radical change in method, not certainly in the teacher's practical attitude toward his pupil. This is in spite of our L. T.'s and B. T.'s who go to teach in schools having read and passed their examination in Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Herbart, Montessori and Dewey. The teachers in our universities have changed in this respect to a certain extent, but we wish we could say that they have changed radically. When our university teachers will fully appreciate the value of respecting the personality of the pupil as the first requisite for imparting higher education and acquire a habit to observe this principle in all his activities higher education will bring a new hope to our hopeless country.

As regards the matter of university administration we are definitely on a poor ground. In spite of the two apparently representative bodies like the Senate and the Syndicate which characterize our universities, the administration is virtually carried on in a more or less autocratic manner with a polite form of dictatorship at the top and humiliating submission to authority all the way down through the hierarchy of Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Registrar,

Controller of Examinations, Principals, Professors, Lecturers, Demonstrators, to the students. The whole institution consists of men who cower to those above them and scarcely hesitate to trample on those beneath them. There is practically no such thing called academic freedom, that one supreme prerogative which every individual in an institution of higher education should enjoy. No excuse is strong enough to deprive the scholars in the university of this precious gift of education. Even abuse of it is far more preferable to absence of it. It is bad economy. It seeks to kill every possible incentive to bold, creative and original thinking. Notes, analysis, abstracts and made-easies are at best the things that take the place of original contribution. Intellectual curiosity suffers from inanition and the mind prefers perpetual holidaying to any exertion in searching for the latest current of thought and events.

Such kind of administration naturally creates an atmosphere which is the very negation of higher education. It is not a cultural atmosphere which higher education necessarily implies. In place of robust optimism, love for new ideas, respect for a different opinion, appreciation and emulation of creative scholarship, joy for other man's success, it gives rise to a spirit of self-corroding pessimism, of intolerance, of gossiping, of intriguing and of cliquishness.

The cultivation of higher education presupposes a spirit of democracy, a spirit of recognizing equal right and opportunity for all. It is the English people who realized this great truth long before others. As early as the year 1878 Disraeli once declared in the House of Commons that 'a university should be a place of light, of liberty, and of learning.' As a result of such high ideal the best English universities are far

more democratic in method of administration than even the best universities in America, that 'sweet land of liberty.' We all know that the great University of Oxford has in the main been administered by the scholars and teachers within her own walls. Many American scholars have lamented that in spite of their sincere love for democracy and education they have not been able to make education as wholly democratic in all its aspects as they should. This is why even an administrative head of a first grade American university, President Schurman warned his countrymen saying, 'Whatever organizations may be necessary in a modern university the institution will not permanently succeed unless the faculty as a group of independent personalities practically control its operations.'

The students who go up for higher education in the university cannot

imbibe a spirit of democracy in an atmosphere of authority. How can they be expected then to live and work for democracy when they leave the university and begin their active life in society? We should remember that the greatest problem of the university is to render the transition from class room to practical life easy and to make the extra-mural activities a logical continuation of the intra-mural courses. If democracy is to be defended as the best and highest ideal of men in society, let us not forget that the same must be realized in every stage of our education, more emphatically in university education which is the most important factor in giving us the best chance to practise living our high ideal that we may not fail to do the same when we leave the university for more active, fruitful and responsible life.

A GLANCE AT OUR PAST

BY KAPILESWAR DAS, M.A., B.Ed.

(India and China have an unbroken continuity in their cultural life, extending from pre-historic times to the present day. Based upon ethical and spiritual values these cultures persisted. The future course of the world will be determined by the extent to which the nations of the world are prepared to learn from India and China.—Ed.)

It is human nature to turn lovingly to the past. To think of the past as dead is an aberration of the mind. Indeed in the ever-streaming life-current to catch at the hard present is more or less an impossibility. What is at this moment actual sense-experience is at the next immersed in the depths of the sea of the past. Life-point, ideal and unextensive in itself in mathematical terms, radiates to this side and that,—the ways of the infinite past and the infinite future. We stand on the past and look wistfully to the future roseate with the prismatic tints of countless aspirations, anticipa-

tions and imaginations. What is life, creation, culture and civilization to-day is but the epitome of all thoughts, actions and events of the past and it ever falls short of perfection. 'We look before and after and pine for what is not,' sings the poet plaintively: This ceaseless pining is our intense immediacy; it is sweetened, mellowed, vivified by the inspirations of the past and the hopeful future. But future to us is uncertain, changeful, covered with the mist of time. Our refuge therefore lies in the past; it is our only solace.

India,—sacred, spiritual, ancient India

with the sublime majesty of her Himalayan peaks, crests and ridges of inaccessible and eternal snow in the north and the broad expanse of dancing blue waters in the south, east and west; fertilized by the limpid life-giving waters of the Ganges, the Indus, the Godavari, the Krishna and numberless other sources; rich with endless fields of the most surprising and luxuriant fertility and inexhaustible mineral resources; undulated with a thousand steep and rocky hills and valleys of picturesque sylvan panorama; the land of broad plains, populous cities and vast stretches of country-side, of sunshine and lakes,—our bodies grow in her elements; our lives shine in the light of her culture; our wisdom is stored in her historical treasure-house; our existence is beatified with the radiance of her literature and art. Her joys and sorrows are ours: she is our protection, our all. Her past verily is the melodious symphony of the strings of our life's lyre.

How feebly now does the pulse of Indian life beat; how tremblingly,—emaciated in the throes of despair. A thick pall of slavery, weakness and poverty has deadened its free play. Peace and prosperity, freedom and fulfilling expression have become so dreamy and distant to us. Our young do not act fearlessly and with true responsibility; our old are not sympathetically discriminative; our men and women are demoralized, downtrodden and destitute affording a fertile field for constant social and communal bickerings; our country-side devastating with floods, famines, starvation and suffering. Where is our ancient system of *Garukula* education? Where are the ships carrying rich merchandise and plying on the distant shores of the Roman Empire and the Archipelago? Where is Greater India? Will they ever come back to life? Or, are they forever to be the relics of the

museum, a faint memory of the by-gone? These questions haunt us ever and anon.

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That the whole world was in an impenetrable shroud of 'untutored barbarism when in India was burning the beacon light of thought and culture, is now almost the conclusive verdict of historical research. The infinite beauty and variety of her nature inspired her finest souls—the salt of the earth—to probe into its innermost recesses; the search after Reality, the intense longing and struggle to solve the enigmatic riddles of the universe continued unabated. It did not remain limited to the manifested, the visible. Life's urge could not be satisfied with limitations; contradictions had to be resolved into higher blends of harmonious syntheses. The intuitional apprehension of the Whole, the Ineffable, the Illimitable dawned and quickened life to its highest peak of realization. The Vedic seer grasped that which is above time, space and causation and bathed in its glorious effulgence sang the Vedic hymns,—the fountain-source of our philosophies and literatures, arts and sciences. Yajna-*valkya* and *Patanjali*, *Kapila* and *Sri Krishna*, *Narada* and *Badarayana*, *Valmiki* and *Vyasa*, *Manu* and *Atreya* are but a few pillars of this impregnable citadel of Indian thought, metaphysical and realistic. Modern science progresses by leaps and bounds. It seeks to undermine all our beliefs, prejudices and superstitions in the clear light of Reason; theories of sin and eternal damnation, 'construction' of the universe and exclusive deliverance, racial superiority and heathenism lie exposed to-day under its rational analysis. But at the same time it has added richer significance to the core of Indian thought—*Vedanta* and *Sanatana Dharma*—emphasizing on the inherent divinity of man, the eternal

splendour and luminosity of the Self, the ethical import of *Karma*, the law of piety, universal love and renunciation. To the present distracted world caught in the meshes of the most terrible, unprecedented Armageddon, how significant is the wholesome message of India's spiritual genius. Here and there, now and then a noble soul of the West,—a Goethe or Emerson, a Schopenhauer or Romain Rolland, a Max Müller or Einstein—hears it and proclaims it in a resonant voice. When will the seed of the spirit sprout and grow into an immense fruitfulness?

The greatness of Indian achievement was not confined to the spiritual domain: her literary, artistic, political, social and economic acquisitions were not less remarkable. The prosperous reign of many an emperor, the distinction of many an intellectual prodigy, the self-denial of many a religious aspirant, the life-replenishing art of many a poet, the matchless valour of many a hero, the loving sacrifice of many a *Sati*, the beauty-world of many an artist have enlivened and ennobled the Indian tradition. Its memory, however faint, brings a surge of emotion into our hearts.

Western Imperialism is to-day painfully familiar to us along with its frightful armaments, policy of exploitation and 'divide and rule,' stunting the growth of nationhood on the plea of 'trusteeship.' It is the battle-ground of the ruler and the ruled, the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the capitalist and the labourer, the gifted and the indigent, the white and the coloured: the shrill cry of frustration and fierce competition through the play of inhuman greed and selfishness pierces through its heartless grinding. Empires were not unknown in ancient India; they had their shortcomings, for nothing human is perfect. But they did not

lose sight of the spiritual ideal; religion wove the warp and woof of their synthetic texture; peace and fellowship were their supreme objective.* Ashoka's empire furnishes an example of their inner working. His rock and pillar edicts and inscriptions to-day are the immortal evidences of the fundamentals on which a mighty empire can stand without a tinge of modern war-equipment. What catholicity, benevolence, and deep humanity radiated in those days from Taxila, Mathura, Pataliputra, Benares, Vikramshila, Vatabhi, and Nalanda working itself out in the building of numberless public works of the greatest beneficence, centres of education and sustenance.

The Kushan, Gupta and Vardhana empires followed; the sciences received special attention. Great assemblies of scientific men were held at Ujjain in which many were honoured. It was the age of great mathematicians and astronomers, linguists and chemists,—Aryabhatta and Varahamihira, Nagarjuna and Ashvaghosha. Ahimsa of course as a matter of policy applied to real mass-living was found to be idealistic and so far military training was organized; but the ideal was never flung to the winds; actuality was approximated to it and hinged upon its key as far as possible. At a later day Akbar's empire, though alien in foundation, could easily grasp it through religious toleration and a welding of different races and communities into a single nation, and to that extent it became strong and well established. Again the formations of the Mahrattas and the Sikhs into strong peoples still later was also an outcome of the same religious principle. Shivaji, the passionate devotee of the Divine Mother, dreamt the dream of Ramarajya and sought to re-orient it in this country; the flaming-forge of Guru Nanak's truth-strung life cast his disciples into a life of wonderful

earnestness, simplicity, discipline and determination. But everything has a fall in course of time; rise presupposes it. The moment the Mahrattas had recourse to gradual abandoning of administrative system and civil government on one hand and Sikhism turned into a narrow militaristic creed on the other, seeds of dissensions were sown into their folds and decay was inevitable.

Ancient India was never isolated : no insularity lulled her into pale self-complacency. The fabric of Indian life is multi-threaded : innumerable streams of personal, sectional and racial thought and culture have flowed into and swelled the mighty current of her immemorial existence. Persian, Greek, Turkish, Mongolian, Scythian, Bactrian, Parthian, Kushan, Hun, Pathan, European,—how many waves of invasion flooded this country and filled it with burning, killing, and plundering. What rivers of blood flowed here on the wake of Chengiz, Timur and Nadir. The destructive aspect of their actions has been set aside as a hideous phantom; the quotas of civilization they brought as offerings on the altar of the mother country were rightly prized; they became one with the people. The foundation could never be shaken, for so is the deep-rooted tradition-bound Indian life; such is its mighty forbearance, tolerance, capacity for deep suffering and making it a means of resurrection. The law of the jungle, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth was never in her code; she impressed one and all with her catholic mould; conflict of cultures was to her a way to gain fresh pastures anew, a perpetual growing in the stature of manhood.

On one product of these earlier invasions we longingly, albeit sentimentally, dwell upon,—the Rajput episode of romance and chivalry, hospitality and undaunted heroism, fidelity and valour, noble spirit and vindication of honour,

wherein are enshrined and idolized the redoubtable exploits and inflexible fortitude of Prithviraj, Sangha and Pratap and the intrepidity and daring of princesses Samyukta and Padmini; the glorious struggles of which were so dramatically enacted on the fields of Tarain, Khanwa and Haldighat; wherein the loving embrace of the terrible *Jahwar* was the calm repose of undaunted womenfolk.

It is unnecessary here to dwell upon the underlying beauties of the great depths of Sanskrit literature—our classical literary output,—its portrayal of nature, delineation of character, universal thought and idealism, richly musical diction,—its unwavering pursuit of the true, the good and the beautiful,—its breadth, height and imagination. Bhartrihari, Shriharsha, Bana, Bhavabhuti and Kalidas are now shining diadems in all leading universities and academic circles of the world. Literature is ever associated with philosophic thought and art and how monumental and highly original is India's achievement of the latter. To-day, Shankara's Advaita, Chaitanya's path of love and devotion, Tansen's melodious music, Nur Jehan's artistic life of luxury, Aurangzeb's simple domestic life are valuable materials in our history. The innumerable caves and temples with which this country is dotted, its Kutb Minar and Taj Mahal, Shahjanabad and Moti Masjid, Ajanta and Ellora, Konark and Bhuvaneswar, Sanchi and Amritsar are but a few of the imperishable relics of the excellence which its architecture, sculpture and painting once attained,—their marvellous exquisiteness, monumental workmanship, graceful design, soaring grandeur, inlaid ornamentation, subtle hues and recondite shadows.

But India fell, was forced on her knees about two centuries back. Inscrutable is the destiny of man and country : all

her genius was for a time stifled, her original independent creative flow impeded, her power enthralled, in spite of her greatness India fell. She bartered the gem of her independence with shaking hands on the fields of Plassey and Buxar, in the Carnatic, Mahratta, Afghan, Mysore, Sikh and Burmese wars, in the great Sepoy Mutiny. As we sow, we

reap; we are the architects of our own fortunes. If we are not responsible for our fall, who else? And if we ourselves will not rise, who can help us? The period of doubt and despair is anyhow gone. India is awake. The past has inspired her and the future beckons her to a higher destiny. Glory unto Renascent India!

KALI DANCING ON THE BREAST OF SHIVA

BY PROF. AKSHAYA KUMAR BANERJEA

(Concluded from the previous issue)

VIII. KALI—WHY BLACK AND NAKED?

Let us contemplate on the significance of some of the prominent features of the Image of Kāli, as revealed to the hearts of the great devotees and as presented in material forms by the artists. Kāli, rising from the spiritual bosom of Shiva, appears in black colour, which is the mother of all colours, the potentiality of all the diversified relative colours, just as the white colour of Shiva is the fulfilment and unity of all the colours. This signifies the infinite potentiality of the Cosmic Energy, the Power of Shiva. From the absolutely unmanifested state, in which She is one with Shiva, She gradually manifests Herself into coloured existences. The diverse colours pertain to the nature of finite realities, which are Her partial self-manifestations. Through Her progressive self-manifestation, self-diversification and unification of the diversities in Herself, Kāli may be said to be continuously in the process of becoming Gauri (the fair-complexioned Shakti of Shiva). In the *Kālikā-Purāṇam* there is a poetic and mythological description of Kāli becoming Gauri through Her

Tapasya, through Her self-dynamization, through the progressive actualization of Her potentiality. Kāli reflects the perfect supra-mundane and supersensuous colour of Shiva more and more clearly upon Her cosmic Body in course of Her evolutionary self-manifesting career in the universe. But though the process of Her becoming multi-coloured and golden-complexioned has been going on from the beginning of creation, Her finite self-manifestations are considered insignificant in consideration of Her infinite, incomprehensible, unmanifested energy. It is in the light of Her unmanifested infinity that we are taught to evaluate the finite, coloured plurality of our experience—Her finite diversified self-expression. Being infinite and eternal, without any limitations of space or time or quality, She must necessarily be conceived as *naked*, as without any clothing to wrap up Her body. All creation is in the lap of Her all-pervading Existence.

IX. KALI—IN MOTION AS WELL AS AT REST

The Divine Mother of the universe is artistically represented as eternally

moving onward in the right direction with Her eyes smilingly gazing at the face of Shiva and with Her legs dancing in delight on His breast, but nevertheless, as standing still with a face struck with wonder at Her own performance without moving a single step astray from where She eternally is. She is the embodiment of the entire Time-Process (Kāla), standing and dancing on the breast of Timeless Eternity (Mahākāla), that Shiva is conceived to be. Though moving or running rhythmically and delightfully in Her ceaseless course of cosmic, diversified self-manifestation from the past towards the future, from creation to destruction and from destruction to re-creation, from lower and more self-concealing planes of self-expression to higher and more self-unveiling planes of self-expression, still the past is not to Her dead and gone, destruction does not mean annihilation, the lower planes of existence do not become non-existent with the appearance of the higher planes, and the future also is not wholly absent from the present in Her body, those which are yet to come into being in future are not absolutely non-being at present. The past and the future are equally present, though in different forms, in Her all-pervading, all-comprehending Body. She wears the garland of the departed souls and the contributions they made to the world system upon Her breast. The mutual exclusiveness between the past, the present and the future—between the three moments of Time—pertains to Her finite and transitory self-manifestations. What are eternally in Her are being phenomenally evolved from, developed in and merged into Her in temporal succession. Thus though as distinguished from Shiva, Her changeless, motionless, silent and tranquil Self and Lord and Support. She is eternally of a dynamic and

moving nature, She is really moving from Herself to Herself. Her movements are not from one place to another or from one time to another, for all place and time are within Herself. Her movements are within Herself, only Her own self-realizations, the progressive manifestations of the transcendent glories of Shiva in Herself in phenomenal forms. Her continuous movement does not take Her anywhere outside the breast of Shiva, there being no abode for Her other than Shiva's breast; but rather it is the breast of Shiva that supplies all life and energy, all rhythm and music, all light and ideal to Her in Her cosmic movement. Taken as a whole, Mother Kālī's cosmic dance is motion and rest at the same time, self-evolution and self-sameness in union with each other.

While Her feet are rooted in the breast of Shiva, Her eyes—specially the third eye—are eternally fixed upon Shiva's face, which is the ultimate ideal of Her evolutionary cosmic process. Her creative journey starts from the stage of apparent concealment of Shiva's ideal character,—concealment of Truth, Goodness, Beauty and Bliss unified in Shiva's transcendent nature—proceeds on through a physical, moral, aesthetic and intellectual order of dualities and pluralities, and aims at ending it at the stage of perfect realization of that ideal character of Shiva. She begins with hiding Shiva's face behind Her own, seeks through the progressive service of Shiva to reflect the glories of Shiva's face upon Her own, and aims at uniting Her face with the face of Shiva and ultimately hiding Her face within the face of Shiva. But all the while She exists by Shiva's existence, She shines by Shiva's light, She acts by Shiva's power, She is inwardly one with Shiva and outwardly in eternal wedlock with and inalienable from

Shiva. This is the Hindu spiritual conception of the world-order, and this is sought to be represented in the Image of Mother Káli on the breast of Shiva.

The self-conscious Divine Power, looking upon Her own entire Body and finding within it the whole universe extending from the infinite past to the infinite future and comprehending all orders of existences in all stages of evolution with all sorts of complications and apparent contradictions, appears to be Herself struck with astonishment and perhaps with a sweet sense of shame. She is supposed to be biting Her tongue with Her teeth in shame and astonishment at Her self-manifestation in this all-comprehensive Cosmic Form in the presence of Her all-transcending Lord.

X. THE FOUR ARMS OF THE DIVINE MOTHER

The Divine Mother is represented as having four hands which carry four kinds of symbols. The number four does not of course set any limits. She is described in the scriptures as having everywhere Her hands, everywhere Her feet, everywhere Her eyes and ears, everywhere Her head and face. She is represented sometimes as four-armed, sometimes as ten-armed, sometimes as hundred-armed, sometimes as thousand-armed, and so on. However, ordinarily Káli is made to appear before us with four arms which are stretched out over all the four directions of the universe. The symbols which they hold are meant to suggest the general principles of the Divine plan and its execution in the universe, the modes of the exercise of the Divine governing power upon the diverse kinds of creatures, the laws of creation and destruction and evolution in this cosmic order and the ultimate purpose immanent in it.

The cosmic dance of the Divine Power on the breast of the Divine

Spirit, as it has been already remarked, consists primarily in manifesting the absolute unity of the Spirit as a unitary system of dualities and pluralities,—in manifesting His absolute Truth, Goodness, Beauty and Bliss in a system of finite transitory beings, relatively real and unreal, good and evil, beautiful and ugly, happy and miserable. The progress of this dance consists essentially in developing the individuals and species from relative unreality to relative reality, from relative physical, moral and spiritual evil and ugliness to relative physical, moral and spiritual goodness and beauty, from relative ignorance, bondage, depression and sorrow to relative knowledge, freedom, elevation and enjoyment. In and through such an evolutionary process it seeks to reflect in more and more distinct and brilliant forms the Truth, Goodness, Beauty and Bliss of Shiva upon this world-order.

This evolutionary plan of the Divine Mother in Her cosmic self-expression implies on the one hand the progressive destruction by Herself of the lower and lower forms of Her manifestation, of the relatively unreal, illusory, evil, ugly and sorrow-ridden forms of Her creation, of the limitations and shadows of Truth, Goodness, Beauty and Bliss. She seeks to evolve, of the various forces of resistance and revolt She Herself playfully creates and sets against the forces of progress and revelation of Shiva's character in Her universe, and on the other hand it implies the preservation of order and harmony among all the diverse forms of Her cosmic self-manifestations and the progressive unveiling of the Divine Truth, Goodness, Beauty and Bliss hidden in the innermost nature of each of these manifested forms. Thus the Divine Power is in relation to Her cosmic self-manifestations not only the affectionate Mother and Nurse, but also

the just and iron-handed Ruler and the relentless Suppressor and Slayer;—She is at the same time soft and stern, sweet and severe, loving and terrifying, charming and awe-inspiring, smiling and frowning, offering boons and brandishing the sword. In Her cosmic design She creates limitations and hindrances to progress in order to overcome and destroy them. She creates terrible hideous monstrous shadows with a view to illuminating them with the light of Truth and thereby to bring about their destruction. She playfully manifests Her own power in the forms of apparently irrepressible and unconquerable Satanic forces, rebellious against Herself, rebellious against the order and harmony of Her own diversified self-manifestations, rebellious against the peace and beauty of the universe, and equally playfully She represses and conquers and destroys them and converts them into appropriate instruments for bringing about higher and higher orders of Her Divine self-expressions. This is Her cosmic dance, and this process of evolution is represented by the symbols of Her four arms.

XI. THE OPERATIONS OF MOTHER'S LEFT HANDS

Now look at the Divine hands of Mother Kālī. In Her lower left hand you find the bleeding head of the Asura (Satan). This shows the destructive operation of the Divine Mother in Her evolutionary creative process and the designed end of all rebellious forces—all apparently monstrous forces of evil—in the universe. This left-handed operation of the Divine Mother forms the basis of fresh creation as well as of the harmony of the cosmic process. The lower orders of Her own self-manifestations, the manifested forces of evil and disorder, the incoherent elements in nature, are being constantly destroyed and eliminated

by the Mother Herself with Her lower left hand, for the evolution of the higher orders, for the realization of the higher forms of good and beauty and for the achievement of greater and sweeter harmony in the universe. All the bitter struggles for existence and the massacres of the unfit, all the havoc and catastrophes in nature, all the disasters and cries of agony, all the cyclones and earthquakes and epidemics and wars, which we experience in the world, are looked upon by the enlightened devotees of Mother Kālī as the playful operations of the relatively unimportant lower left hand of their softhearted, loving Mother, as necessary steps for the preservation and development of Her moral and aesthetic world-order, and as the foreshadows of the evolution of higher and nobler and more beautiful forms of Her self-manifestation.

In Her upper left hand the Mother holds aloft the awe-inspiring sabre, which is the emblem of Her unchallengeable governing authority, the symbol of Her will and power to keep effective control over and preserve harmony among all the mutually conflicting forces and elements created by Her and allowed to act and reach upon one another according to their distinct characteristics. It refers to the Upanishadic sayings that 'In fear of Her Fire burns, the Sun shines, the Wind blows, the Lightning thunders and the God of Death performs His allotted duties,' that 'It is under Her commanding authority that the Sun and the Moon remain true to their respective positions, the Earth and the Heavens are settled in their proper places,' and so on.

The sword in the hand of the Divine Mother strikes terror into hearts of the ignorant, the short-sighted and the vicious-minded creatures, the male-

volent, egotistic demons moving to create disorder in this Divinely ordained world and to aggrandize themselves at the expense of others, the greedy and ambitious rebels against the moral and spiritual design of the universe; while it inspires faith and trust and hope and admiration and reverence into the hearts of Her enlightened far-sighted, pure-minded children, the benevolent, humble, well-meaning creatures ready to sacrifice themselves for the peace, order, harmony, unity, beauty and happiness of the collective life of the universe. This sword weakens and terrifies and destroys the apparently powerful and terrifying and destructive immoral and uncouth forces of the world; it strengthens and encourages and enlivens the apparently weak and peace-loving forces of good and beauty and truth, the forces of creation and evolution and progress. The ever-vigilant sword with dazzling brightness in the beautiful hand of the Divine Mother appears as a symbol of Her deep affection and solicitude for Her faithful, adoring children, who feel themselves perfectly safe and secure in the kingdom of their loving Mother, whose power and authority there can be none to dispute. 'The teeth and nails of the tigress, which frighten the enemies, are the guarantees of safety to her cubs.'

The fulfilment of the operations of Her left hands is to be found in the pose of Her right hands. The Mother is eternally moving onward towards the right, leaving the apparently struggling and revolting and suppressing and destroying and governing aspects of the world-order behind Her back, showing through the expression of Her relative indifference to these aspects how comparatively unimportant and non-essential they are from the standpoint of intrinsic value, how low

positions they occupy in Her cosmic self-expression, how in the evolutionary order of the universe they exist only to be transcended and to make way for the realization of the higher and nobler and more essential aspects of Her own nature. In the Divine order of the universe, which consists of the harmony of various kinds of dualities in struggling competition with one another, the terrible, the hideous, the ludicrous, the contemptible, the pitiable, etc. have their assigned places; but they do not come into existence for their own sake; they appear on the scene to be transcended and eliminated and to serve as the background and foothold and preparatory steps for the progressive unfoldment of the inner truth and beauty and goodness of the Spirit in this universe.

XII. BEHOLD THE MOTHER'S RIGHT HANDS

The upper right hand of the Divine Mother is holding out fearlessness (Abhaya) to Her children. The Mother appears to be sending out through the gesture of Her right hand the message of fearlessness, hope, strength, confidence and love to all Her creatures. She is as it were telling them: Be not afraid, O ye children of Immortality, never be dejected in spirits, never be frightened by or feel yourselves weak and helpless at the sight of death and destruction, privation and bereavement, struggle and competition, wars and atrocities; remember that all these are the Divinely planned steps in the process of progress; remember that Good is the truth of the apparent evils, Beauty is the truth of the apparent monstrosities, Bliss is the truth of the apparent sufferings, Immortality is the truth of apparent death and destruction. The Divine Mother seems to be inviting their attention to Her whole

majestic Body and Her whole cosmic plan and warning them against taking partial views of things, against regarding the phenomena as isolated facts complete in themselves. The Truth is manifested in its full glory in the whole, and not in the parts viewed in isolation from one another. The Mother is, as it were, telling Her awe-struck children with an affectionate smile in Her eyes: Don't you see that the whole world with all its diverse phenomena is from Me, in Me, by Me and for Me, that I am the beginning, the middle and the end of everything you experience in the world, that what appear to be dead and destroyed are as much in Me as those that appear to be living and moving triumphantly, that those that cry in agony are as much parts of Myself as those that are apparently the causes of their agony, that the victors and the vanquished, the oppressors and the oppressed, the slayers and the slain, the exploiters and the exploited, are all My children, equally inalienable manifestations and parts of Myself, equally governed and controlled by My will and power and cosmic design? Don't you see that I am every moment begetting all these diverse kinds of children with diverse characteristics and powers and missions, I am suckling them and maintaining them and allowing them to play their parts on my wide breast, and again I am eating them up and turning them into indistinguishable parts of Myself in the proper time? But see with all these how majestic and beautiful and lovable I am, how well-formed and harmoniously constituted My entire body in all its parts is, how I am the embodiment of Truth, Beauty, Goodness and Bliss. Take a comprehensive view of Myself, your loving Mother, and you will find nothing to be afraid of, nothing to be perturbed with, nothing to be shocked

by; you will be fearless and calm and full of joy.

The children of the Divine Mother, who acquire the spiritual insight to see the whole manifested appearance of the Mother in the universe and to discover the skilful operation of Her right hands behind the operation of Her left hands become absolutely fearless. Those who attain this insight into the inner operation of the Divine Mother in the universe, who find the progressive realization of the True, the Good, the Beautiful and the Blissful within the apparent unrealities, evils, monstrosities and miseries in the world of experience, are not perturbed and moved to action by any fears or anxieties either in their individual life or in their collective life; they feel no necessity for 'keeping the powder dry' or for 'organizing themselves into warring camps' in order to protect or develop themselves. They are moved to do the duties, which they find allotted to them by the worldsystem, with fearlessness and courage and calmness and joy, out of a deep sense of duty or Swadharma and out of loving devotion to the Mother. In the course of cosmic evolution such children of the Mother are regarded as having reached a high stage of enlightened existence.

The children who are blessed by the Mother with the sense of fearlessness in the world do not themselves become at any time causes of fears to others. They become perfectly non-violent and friendly towards all creatures in thought, word and deed. Their consciousness is illumined with the knowledge of unity between themselves and all other manifestations of the Divine Mother. They feel that they are 'truly begotten' children of the Mother, and that the same Mother with Her heart full of tender affection,—with Her motherly bosom swelling with the milk of universal love and good will open for and inviting

to all children—is the sovereign mistress of all the affairs of the world. The world-process appears to them not only as a physical and moral order, but an order of love and motherly affection.

XIII. LOOK TO THE HAND POINTING TO SHIVA'S FACE

The remaining hand of the Divine Mother is called by the devotees the hand of Boon or Blessing—the hand of *Summum Bonum* of the cosmic process. This hand is pointed towards the Face of Shiva. The highest boon which this hand of the Divine Mother offers to the finite creatures led on through various stages of evolution in the universe and which is the supreme Ideal immanent in Her cosmic dance is the Face of Shiva—the perfect goodness, beauty and bliss of Shiva's transcendent character. It is the one Absolute Spirit—Shiva—whom His own Inscrutable Power (Maya-Shakti)—the Cosmic Energy—manifests as countless finite spirits—Jivas—embodied in various orders of psycho-physical organisms and placed under and pushed through various kinds of physical and mental conditions. Through various evolutionary contrivances and mechanisms She leads them on step by step from one plane of existence to another towards the final realization of Shivahood in each of them. As on the one hand She creates limitations and veils upon Shiva's Shivahood in Her self-manifestations, so on the other hand She destroys the limitations and veils and restores, as it were, Shivahood to Him. The course of Her self-manifestation starts from the absolute unity of Shiva, makes Him appear as a plurality of Jivas, gradually refines and enlightens them with the purity and light of Shiva's character, progressively unveils their essential Shiva-character which She Herself veiled, and ends with the restoration of Shivahood to them. Her everwaking

third eye—the eye of perfect knowledge—indicates that Her own Shiva-consciousness is eternally undimmed and undistorted, She is eternally conscious of Her identity with Shiva, She is eternally Sachchidánandamayee, inwardly enjoying the Truth, Beauty, Goodness and Bliss of the Spirit.

XIV. CONCLUSION

We need not attempt at any further elucidation of moral and spiritual significance of the other special features of the grand Image. Devotees and thinkers have taught us that every single detail of the Form of Mother Káli is expressive of some deeper universal truth. Songs in glorification of the Mother, stories about Her Lílá (sports) and Her self-revelations to the Bhaktas (devotees), are all full of interpretations of the mysteries that have taken a concrete form in the Image. It is evident that the Image of Káli dancing on the breast of Shiva is conceived with a view to represent in a majestic form the Vedantic idea of the universe.

It shows how Time dances on the breast of timeless Eternity, how everchanging Matter and Mind dance on the breast of changeless Spirit, how Plurality and Finitude dance on the breast of the unity of the Infinite, how the Physical and Moral Order of the universe dances on the breast of the transcendent self-enjoyment of the Absolute Reality. It seeks to indicate that this vast boundless world, which appears to be a mechanical aggregate of innumerable distinct objects and events to our outer senses, a harmonious physical system governed by natural laws to our synthetic understanding, a moral order based on the principle of justice and governed by some dynamic ideal to our developed moral consciousness, is ultimately a spiritual entity, a living embodiment and moving self-expression of the Supreme Spirit, a

temporal and spatial manifestation of eternal Truth, Goodness, Beauty and Bliss. It points out that all the varieties of all the planes of our experiences are harmoniously and beautifully arranged and unified in the spiritual Body of the Divine Mother, who is a perfectly self-conscious and self-enjoying, eternally dynamic and playful, supremely loving and charming Personality, in whom all time is an eternal *Now* and all space is an infinite *Here*. With the Image of Mother Káli shining before our eyes, we are face to face with the entire universe as one living Whole with whom cordial, personal intercourse is possible, one charmingly good and beautiful and loving Spiritual Being to whom we can offer our body and heart and soul, one magnificent embodiment of the Supreme Ideals our reason and heart seek for. In Her presence Nature and Spirit—Spirit and Nature—become one in our eyes. We find the Supreme Spirit reflected on, embodied in and shining through

Nature, and we find Nature rising out of and dancing in delight on the bosom of the Spirit. We find Nature spiritualized and Spirit naturalized.

This insight into the truth of Nature and Spirit fills our heart with the sentiments of awe, wonder, admiration, reverence and love. We feel inwardly impelled and enchanted to give ourselves up to the feet of the Divine Mother, to make an offering of our worldly ego—individual, social and national, bodily, sensuous and mental—to Her universal and spiritual Ego. We feel the inner urge to unite our consciousness with Her eternal super-consciousness—that is to say, with Her essential Shiva-consciousness. When the ego is perfectly surrendered to the Mother of the ego, the spirit within us is unified with the Absolute Spirit and attains Shiva-hood. This is the ultimate goal of all existences, because it is Existence itself, absolute blissful Existence.

SCIENCE AND CIVILIZATION

By CHUNILAL MITRA, M.A., B.T.

Civilization brings with it the idea of progress. They are not only interallied but often synonymous. Growth of the progress of our being means also the growth of civilization. It consists broadly in the well-being of mankind the constituents of which are the subjugation of nature, the perfection of social machinery and the personal development of the individuals. Comtê interpreted civilization in terms of the growth of reason. While Spencer and others following Adam Smith regard it as the growth of sympathy. Still others hold that progress can be conceived in a twofold way. Objectively conceived, progress is an increasing intercourse, a

multiplication of relationships, an advance in material well-being, and an evolution of rational conduct. Subjectively viewed, 'it is an expansion of the consciousness of mind.'

Spengler in his *Decline of the West*, has made a definitely clear-cut distinction between civilization and culture. According to him, every civilization is the last stage of every culture. It is culture in decay. And it cannot be otherwise. For, the former is the inevitable destiny of the latter. As illustrations he cites that the Romans were the civilization stage of the Greek culture, that European civilization began from the nineteenth century as the decay

of the West European culture. The said writer believes that civilization is always external and artificial. The Hindus had similar ideas. *Sabhyatā* and *Krishti* correspond to civilization and culture. The latter is expressed in art and literature, in morals and religion. The sum total of these expressions is known as civilization.

Again, one of the claims of civilization is the bringing of nature and her laws under control. When Swami Vivekananda placed man and his destiny above the region, the climate, the space, the environment, in one word, above nature, he virtually meant the same thing—though in his inward vision he had a richer and a far wider conception of civilization which is still to be realized. In one of his addresses in London (1896) Swamiji told us that 'Man is man so long he is struggling to rise above nature. Man is born to conquer nature and not to follow it.' If this is taken to be the meaning of civilization—which we think it is—to our mind science, far from retarding civilization, is fulfilling and perfecting it. Nay, in its rapid march science is going to give the finishing touch to civilization.

For, after all, what else is science than the study of the various departments of nature and the generalizations of this study? It is at one and the same time the study of man and his surroundings. And, who is there to deny that the achievements of science have made our life easy and comfortable, that it has gone a long course in simplifying the complexity of life and in removing the conflicts and turmoils of our daily journey? Has it not made a premium on our intellect in the sense of giving a reorientation to our eternal quest for knowledge, and has it not in that sense coalesced with philosophy and religion? In fact, science has made our problems easier, life happier, and journey better.

For, the problem of science is part of the wider problem of life—the problem of all experience. Nay, the motive force of science and philosophy, art and religion, is the same. Science tries to explore the hidden treasure and philosophy attempts to know the unknowable. As Sir Radhakrishnan observed, 'Science is cosmopolitan in its essence and reality,' and that 'there is no such thing as Proletarian Mathematics, or Nazi Chemistry or Jewish Physics.' Undoubtedly so. Thus civilization is co-extensive with science. They do not conflict but complement each other.

Nay, more, civilization is nothing more than science's legacy to us. Hence, it is wrong to say that the latter has stood on the way of the former. Any unqualified statement like this betrays all logic and honesty. It is a travesty of the simple truth that civilization is the result of the cumulative effort of the scientists. In fact, what else is our age apart from the inventions and discoveries? So, what we are going to assert is that, far from vilifying, we are too late at this stage in recognizing world's indebtedness to science. We are only to register our veneration for it, and, to acknowledge this simple fact that modern civilization on whose ambit we are is nothing but science's bequest to humanity.

But there is the other side of the shield. There is some element of truth in the argument of the leftists which is not to be ignored. It cannot be gainsaid that the best inventions and discoveries of science have been converted into powerful engines of human destruction. In no period of human history has there been such a moral perversity, such a universal jealousy, individual discontentment, and a mutual distrust and suspicion. It cannot be denied that science has endangered life at every moment of our existence; that the horrible scenes of the modern scientific world has created a

reign of terror for us. But what is to be noted in this connection is that, for all this science is not to be blamed or vilified. The reason of it is to be sought elsewhere. These are mainly due to the use—misuse or ignorant use, of science. Or to use the Freudian terminology, these are due to the idiosyncrasies of individual statesman. The havoc that is being wrought in the world is due to the malevolent projects of a few political misfits. Hence, it would be a sheer mistake to evaluate the worth of science in terms of the injurious effects it has produced, the atrocities it has indirectly perpetrated on mankind. For as has already been said the attempt of science has been all along for the welfare of human beings. For we do not think that a Newton ever discovered the laws of gravitation, optics and the calculus for any vicious purpose in his mind; that ever a Galileo founded his telescope for taking an aerial view of the countries to be captured. None is likely to accept that a Marconi ever discovered his wireless telegraphy for making any faulty and filthy negotiation. Last of all, though not the least, none is agreed to accept the proposal that any Alfred Nobel ever conceived of destroying the beautiful palaces and cities—the assets of the generations of men, by his dynamite! In fact, the scientists never thought, far less planned of destroying human civilization to its foundation. Undoubtedly, the untiring and ceaseless attempts of the scientists have bequeathed to us many things which are often used as the weapons of killing human civilization. If we at all enter into any nefarious conflict between man and man, between nation and nation we ourselves will be held responsible, and, in that case we would be denying the prerogative of our being rational and self-legislative. But we should bear in mind that Plutus has

proved once for all that it is not money but the use of it that is the root cause of all wrongs and evils. On the contrary, rightly used it renders immense good to mankind. It wipes out the tears of widows and the hunger of the orphans. So, in the last resort 'Science must be studied with an eye to the spiritual destiny of mankind—its insurgent oneness—without hoping to estrange the social solidarity of individual nature nor intending to dig any breach or gulf between nations.' Its outputs should be utilized not for forging more fetters and cataloguing more calamity for humanity but for promoting universal good and liberation of human knowledge from the limitations of the physical. In that case the scientists far from being the destroyers should really be the custodians of our civilization. Because one thing is certain that for all practical purposes the mishaps are not because of science but *in spite of it*. Hence, it would be a blank misunderstanding of the whole issue and would be putting the cart before the horse if we simply go on cursing science.

So, what is urgently incumbent on our part is to devote our whole energy for a better, completer and a richer understanding of each other and our mutual relations, and, what is left for science and philosophy, art and religion, is to maintain our social solidarity, moral stability, and, finally to discover the identity of divergent motives and the spiritual oneness of mankind. Of course, it is really hopeful that humanity is marching towards that. For, never before in the history of our race has there been such a synthetic co-operation and fellow-feeling between science and philosophy. What more, in the representative minds of West (Europe and America) we find the greatest scientists becoming the greatest philosophers. Nay, more. The scientist-philosophers

have turned to be religious i.e. merging themselves in religion.

The case will be evident from a few illustrations. Speaking of a few representative heads: In diagnosing the geneology of our life Sir James Jeans formulates his opinion in an interrogation. He does not find out the cause of life and asks himself, 'Is it merely atoms, or is it atoms *plus* life?' Or to put it in another way, could a sufficiently skilful chemist create life out of the necessary atoms, as a boy can create a machine out of 'Meccano' and then make it go? 'We do not know the answer,' Jeans himself says. Life and consciousness have not yet been explained by the greatest scientists. They are to presume some principle other than the physical. In fact, they refuse themselves to be the ultimate believers in the physical forces as the be-all and end-all of life and the universe. Quite aptly Sir Jeans has characterized his cosmology as the 'Mysterious Universe.' In short the said writer concludes 'Little is left of the forbidding materialism of the Victorian scientists: modern physics is moving in the directions of philosophical idealism.' Sir Arthur Eddington, the great scientist holds substantially the same view when he observes that all through the physical world runs an unknown content which must really be the stuff of our own consciousness. In *Science and the Modern World* Mr. Whitehead makes an important distinction between the spatio-temporal flux and what he calls 'eternal objects,' a distinction which is strongly reminiscent of Plato's distinction between the world of Becoming and the world of Forms. Professor Whitehead is further of the opinion that the eternal objects constitute the realm of possibility, and though divorced from the flux of events the present world is an abstraction still, the actual world is nothing more than a

selection, a selection out of the infinite number of worlds. Descartes' unqualified dualism he pronounces to be a vicious divorce, a divorce which, according to him, has 'poisoned all subsequent philosophy.' He is distinctly of opinion that neither matter nor life can be understood in isolation. They must first be 'fused.' Throughout his other works he has voiced this much that the fundamental stuff of the world is a creative and changing process. And what delights us to remark in this occasion is that the Hindus had a similar (or a richer) conception of the world organism as a whole when they refuse to accept any gulf and distinction between the Kshetra and the Kshetrajna, matter and mind, object and subject, the known and the knower.

It is no use citing the views of many other scientists of the present-day world. Their latest thoughts and findings have not surpassed the Hindu conception vouched about thousands of years back. What behoves us to maintain is that science and religion have joined hands and have, as if, coalesced. Hence there is not the least inkling either to construe or to conclude that science is ever a standing bar to our civilization of to-day or of to-morrow or of the days bygone. On the contrary, at the risk of repetition we assert that, if the scientific outputs are used rightly with an eye to human well-being in all its aspects and the scientists themselves endeavour for the same ulterior objects, they, far from being a menace and an impediment, should become the harbingers, the exponents and the precursors of our civilization as they had been in the past. Let that be science's aim, let it discover the spiritual unity and metaphysical oneness of our being and of the universe, and, let its cumulative efforts in diverse aspects of nature enrich our civilization more and more.

Patriotism is not enough, nor is toleration the last word. They are still the 'idols of the cave.' What we crave for and which the present world stands badly in need of is the recognition of the individual rights and claims of individual men and nations who are dependent and who are under the yoke of some one else. Hence to release science from any false accusation statesmen will have to come forward and they are to initiate an era of universal peace, good will and brotherhood. In the greedy struggle of our race we should not forget the common lot of mankind.

But after all, civilization is what we use, while culture is what we are, and so long it cannot be otherwise the horrors

and havocs, the pitfalls and turmoils of our civilization are not because we are more scientific but because we are less so. However, it is one thing to say that we dislike (or like?) our crushing civilization of machinery and inequality, of bondage and artificiality; it is altogether a different thing to say that for all this science is liable. It would be punishing Paul when Peter is the real culprit. So, the latter should take care and sacrifice everything to save the innocent former. Otherwise, the case is injurious for both; otherwise, humanity will be 'tired of civilizing the apparatus of living till it is well-nigh civilized to death.'

THE MESSAGE OF THE UPANISHADS

BY PROF. S. N. L. SHRIVASTAVA, M.A.

The Upanishads constitute one of the triple bases of Hindu religious thought (Prasthâna-Traya), the other two being the Brahma-Sûtras and the Bhagavad-Gita. In fact, the latter professes to formulate only the essential ideas of the Upanishads. The Upanishads are therefore the primordial source of the spiritual wisdom of the Hindus. They are the crowning achievement of the spiritual genius of India—the stay and foundation of Hindu ideals of life. The sublimity of their soaring meditation, the wide and varied range of their spiritual experiences, their fearless and impassioned proclamation of the verities of soul-consciousness, and the exceeding subtlety of their psychological, metaphysical and mystical analyses, have all joined to evoke for them in the Hindu heart a feeling of awe and reverence and made it love them as Divine Revelation from imme-

morial past. Not only have they appealed to the children of the soil, but have also drawn unstinted praise from such foreign scholars and thinkers as have been able to approach them with an open mind and without any contempt for the alien. Schopenhauer, Max Müller and Paul Deussen—to mention only the most notable amongst them—have been great votaries of the Upanishadic lore. It was Schopenhauer who said: 'There is no study in the whole world more ennobling than that of the Upanishads. These have been the solace of my life, these shall be the solace of my death.' And he prophesied that as a result of the spread of Upanishadic ideas the world would one day witness 'a revolution in thought far more extensive than that which was witnessed by the renaissance of the Greek Literature.' In our own day, we are still mourning the death of a great

lover of the Upanishadic wisdom—the late Irish poet Y. B. Yeats.

The germinal ideas of every system of philosophy in India are traceable to the Upanishads and every great religious teacher or Āchārya appealed to the Upanishads as the final authority for what he had to say. Even an orthodox writer like Kumarila says in his *Tantravārtika*:

विज्ञानमात्रज्ञानमङ्गनैरात्म्यवादानामपि उपनिषत्प्र-
भवत्सम्

i.e. even

the so-called heterodox schools of Buddhist philosophy viz. the school of mentalistic idealism (*Vijñāna-Vāda*), the theory of momentary existence (*Kṣhanika-Vāda*) and the no-soul theory (*Nairātmya-Vāda*) are traceable to the Upanishads as their parent gospel. This shows what an important place the Upanishads have amongst the religious literature of India. Small wonder, that they have been to Indians for scores of shining centuries a perennial source of philosophical wisdom, ethical idealism, and mystical inspiration.

The word Upanishad literally means 'sitting down near' and is intended to be an appellation for the body of spiritual knowledge acquired by inquiring students at the feet of the Illumined Masters. The word also means 'that which destroys' and Shankara in his introduction to the *Taittiriya Upanishad* says that the knowledge about Brahman is called Upanishad because the student devoted to the Upanishadic literature will destroy thereby all bonds of conception, birth, decay, death etc. and will attain Brahman. We need not enter into any controversy as to which of these derivations is the truer, for both meanings hold good without being antithetic to each other.

What is important to remember at the outset is that the Upanishads are not treatises on philosophy in the modern sense, like those of Kant or Hegel or any other modern philosopher presenting a metaphysics in its systematic dialectical development. They were not written with academic or doctrinarian purposes. The main objective with which they were compiled was to stimulate spiritual inquiry, and lead the aspirant on to Illumination. Their interest is pre-eminently practical and the import of their texts pre-eminently mystical. They are the records of deep intuitions and not merely the results of speculative theorizing. The Upanishadic Rishis sought to appraise Truth more through life and experience than through logic. Mere logicism did not find much favour with them. Of course, speculation is not entirely absent in the Upanishads; but speculation in them takes the shape of rational reflection over facts obtained by psychological observation and mystical penetration. The logical is in the closest collaboration with the psychological and the mystical, the mystical preponderating. There is an emphatic insistence on disciplinary equipment and purity of heart, and these are made the very *sine qua non* of the attainment of wisdom. Says the *Kathōpanishad*:

नावरितो दुष्करिताच्चाद्यान्तो नासमाहितः ।

नाशान्तमानसो वापि प्रज्ञानेनैवाप्नुयात् ॥

'Not by those who have not turned away from evil conduct, not by those who are not quiet and composed, nor by those who have not quieted (the operations of) their minds is the (Atman) to be attained. It is realized through *Prajñāna* (creative intuition or gnosis) alone.'

The Upanishads form the concluding portions of the Vedas—hence the

name Vedānta (end of the Vedas) for them. Each Veda has four contiguous parts, the Samhitās, the Brāhmanas, the Āranyakas and the Upanishads, each coming after the other. It is usually held by scholars that these four parts were separately compiled, one after the other, in point of chronological sequence. But some modern scholars are of opinion that the four parts of each Veda constitute one complex, the Brāhmanas being the appendages of the Samhitās, the Āranyakas being the appendages of Brāhmanas, and the Upanishads the appendages of Āranyakas. In their opinion, the process must have been one of *pari passu* collection, rather than of chronological sequence. The truth seems to be that though in keeping with the age-old Indian tradition of connecting all new thought with the old and avoiding the appearance of a cultural discontinuity all the four parts have been recognized as the integral components of one complex whole, yet the dissimilarity of thought and the difference of outlook of the Upanishads from the rest of the Vedas constrains us to accept the theory of their compilations at different periods of time and by different minds. The Upanishads with their reflective and meditative trend, insistence on Self-realization as the sole desirable goal of life and inwardness as the *sine qua non* of that consummation, present a marked contrast to the ritualistic and external cult of the Vedas. 'The advance of the Upanishad on the Vedas,' writes Prof. S. Radhakrishnan, 'consists in an increased emphasis on the monistic suggestions of the Vedic hymns, a shifting of the centre from the outer to the inner world, a protest against the externalism of the Vedic practices and an indifference to the sacredness of the Veda.'¹

¹ *Indian Philosophy* Vol. I, p. 144.

The Upanishads lay out the path of knowledge (Jñāna-Mārga) with its ideal of supreme Emancipation (Nirvāṇa) as the only desirable goal of life; while the Vedas show the path of rituals (Karma-Mārga) calculated to bring material benefit and happiness (Artha, Bhoga) in this world and after-worlds. Says the Kathōpanishad: 'Two paths are open to man, the Ideal and the Pleasure-giving; the wise man (Dhīra) makes a choice between the two after a thorough examination of both. The wise man, however, prefers the Ideal to the Pleasure-giving; but the dull-witted one will choose the latter from the motive of worldly well-being.'²

THE NUMBER AND DATE OF THE UPANISHADS

The Upanishads are said to number 108, of which ten on which Sri Shankaracharya has commented are the chief. The fixing of exact dates of the Upanishads is a baffling problem. According to the accepted views of scholars we should place the date of the Upanishads round about 700 B.C. Prof. Radhakrishnan places all Upanishads, earlier and later, between 1000 B.C. and 400-800 B.C. The earlier Upanishads are pre-Buddhistic, while some of the later Upanishads are post-Buddhistic. The earlier Upanishads are written in prose, and are marked, more or less, by a speculative trend; in the later Upanishads there is recourse to versification and they breathe out an atmosphere of religious fervour and devotion. Deussen classifies the Upanishads in the following manner:—

1. Ancient prose Upanishads: Brihadāranyaka, Chhândôgya, Taittirīya, Aitareya, Kaushitaki, Kena (partly in prose).

² Katha. Up. ii. 2.

2. Verse Upanishads: Isha, Katha, Mundaka and Shvetâshvatara.
 3. Later prose: Prashna and Maîtârânyani.

THE QUEST OF THE UPANISHADS

The quest of the Upanishads is the supreme philosophic quest of the ultimate truth of things—the whence and whither of the universe, the principles which govern man and his actions, the nature of the self of man, the destiny of man, the nature of the First Principle, and so on. The following verses from the Shvetâshvatara and the Kena Upanishads are beautiful compendiums of the principal problems to the solution of which the Upanishadic sages addressed themselves:

‘Is Brahman the cause (of the universe)? Whereto are we sojourning? By whose power are we living? Wherein are we made to rest? And by whom controlled are we passing through this life, through its pleasures and sorrows, conforming to the Law of (as taught by) the knowers of Brahman?’³

‘By whom propelled does the mind fall to its functioning? At whose bidding again does the primordial Prana proceed to do its functions? At whose desire do men utter the speech? What effulgent one, indeed, directs the eye and the ear?’⁴

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE UPANISHADS

The Upanishads are usually said to contain vague philosophic musings,

- ३ किं कारणं ब्रह्म कुतः स्म जाताः
 जीवाम केन क च संप्रतिष्ठा ।
 अचिच्छिताः केन ह्यस्तेरेषु
 वर्तमाने ब्रह्मविदो व्यवस्थासु ॥
 ४ केनेषितं पतति प्रेषितं मनः
 केन प्राणः प्रथमः प्रेति युक्तः ।
 केनेषिता वाचमिमां वदन्ति
 वदुः श्रोत्रं क इ देवो युनक्ति ॥

crude speculations, which only subsequently developed into completed systems of thought. The Upanishadic period is said to be one of general philosophic fermentation, but of no definite and clearly outlined ‘system-building.’ Max Müller likens it to that antecedent time in the rainy weather when the surrounding atmosphere presages the coming of thunder and storm. Such a view is however likely to mislead us into thinking that the Upanishads do not contain in themselves any self-complete or consistent credo or philosophy of life and existence but are simply the first and crude beginnings of the speculative effort of the Indian mind, a fumbling at something not yet certain or definite. On the other hand, the reverse is the truth. The Upanishads do embody a definite and consistent world-view and speak in no uncertain or equivocal voice about the ultimate principles and verities of existence. Of course, as noted above, the Upanishads are not philosophical treatises in the modern sense of the term; but, a thoughtful student cannot fail to discover here and there, certain strikingly original clues for the exploration of Ultimate Reality and their unique methodological suggestions on the basis of which a consistent and comprehensive philosophy can be reared up.

The pivotal point of the Upanishadic philosophical search is the discovery of the Atman the inmost self of man. The key-note of Upanishadic thought is that the sovereign Truth, the ultimate principle of all existence, is an inward something, the very core of man’s inmost being. The Upanishadic thinkers do not postulate the existence of the Atman merely as an axiomatic first principle, but declare it from the depths of their intuitional experience.

The fact that they give theoretical expositions about the nature of the Atman does not mean that they have arrived at it through the speculative pathway, through the high *à priori* road of reason; to them it is a Verity of verities.

What is the Atman? The Atman according to the Upanishads is the bed-rock of Reality, the enduring and unsublatable Real underlying all the fugitive appearances of name and form (Nāma-Roopa). The following extract from the Chhândôgya Upanishad may fairly be taken as a *résumé* of the Atman philosophy of the Upanishads:

What follows is a dialogue between Uddālaka Aruni and his son Shvetaketu.

VI. ii. 1. 'In the beginning, my dear son, there was only that which is, one only, without a second. Others say, in the beginning there was that only which is not, one only, without a second; and from that which is not, that which is, was born.'

2. 'But how could it be so, my dear son?' the father continued. 'How could that which is, be born of that which is not? No, my dear son, only that which is, was in the beginning, one only without a second.'

3. 'It thought, may I be many, may I grow forth. It sent forth fire.'

'That fire thought, may I be many, may I grow forth. It sent forth water.'

'And therefore whenever anybody is anywhere hot and perspires, water is produced on him from fire alone.'

4. 'Water thought, may I be many, may I grow forth. It sent forth earth (food).'

'Therefore whenever it rains anywhere, most food is then produced. From water alone is eatable food produced.'

The father makes the son abstain from food for fifteen days and thus after practically demonstrating to him

the dependence of the mind on food continues the instruction. After that, he understood what his father meant when he said: 'Mind, my son, comes from food, breath from water, speech from fire.'

ix. 1. 'As the bees, my son, make honey by collecting the juices of different trees, and reduce the juices into one form,

2. 'And as these juices have no discrimination, so that they might say, I am the juice of this tree or that, in the same manner, my son, all these creatures, when they have become merged in the true (either in deep sleep or in death), know not that they are merged in the True.

3. 'Whatever these creatures are here, whether a lion, or a wolf, or a boar, or a worm, or a midge, or a gnat, or a mosquito, that they become again and again.

4. 'Now that which is that subtle essence, in it all that exists has its Self. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou, Ò Shvetaketu, art it.'

'Please, Sir, inform me still more,' said the son.

'Be it so, my child,' the father replied.

x. 1. 'These rivers, my son, run, the eastern (like the Gangâ) toward the east, the western (like the Sindhu) toward the west. They go from sea to sea (i.e. the clouds lift up the water from the sea to the sky, and send it back as rain to the sea). They become indeed sea. And as those rivers when they are in the sea, do not know I am this or that river.

2. 'In the same manner, my son, all these creatures when they have come back from the True, know not that they have come back from the True. Whatever these creatures are here, whether a lion, or a wolf, or a boar, or a worm, or a midge, or a gnat, or a mosquito, that they become again and again.

8. 'That which is that subtle essence, in it all that exists has its Self. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou, O Shvetaketu, art it.'

'Please, Sir, inform me still more,' said the son.

'Be it so, my child,' the father replied.

xi. 1. 'If one were to strike at the root of this large tree here, it would bleed, but it would live. If he were to strike at its stem, it would bleed, but it would live. If he were to strike at its top, it would bleed, but it would live. Pervaded by the living Self that tree stands firm, drinking in its nourishment and rejoicing;

2. 'But if the life (the living Self) leaves one of its branches, that branch withers; if it leaves a second, that branch withers; if it leaves a third, that branch withers. If it leaves the whole tree, the whole tree withers. In exactly the same way, my son, know this.' Thus he spoke :

8. 'This (body) indeed withers and dies when the living (Self) has left it; the living (Self) dies not.

'That which is that subtle essence, in it all that exists has its Self. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou, Shvetaketu, art it.'

'Please, Sir, inform me still more,' said the son.

'Be it so, my child,' the father replied.

xii. I. 'Fetch me from thence a fruit of the Nyagrodha tree.'

'Here is one, Sir.'

'Break it.'

'It is broken, Sir.'

'What do you see there?'

'Not anything, Sir.'

2. The father said : 'My son, that subtle essence which you do not perceive there, of that very essence this great Nyagrodha tree exists.

8. 'Believe it, my son. That which

is the subtle essence, in it all that exists has its Self. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou, O Shvetaketu, art it.'

'Please, Sir, inform me still more,' said the son.

'Be it so, my child,' the father replied.

xiii. 1. 'Place this salt in water, and then wait on me in the morning.'

The son did as he was commanded.

The father said to him, 'Bring me the salt, which you placed in the water last night.'

The son, having looked for it, found it not, for, of course, it was melted.

2. The father said : 'Taste it from the surface of the water. How is it?'

The son replied : 'It is salt.'

'Taste it from the middle. How is it?'

The son replied : 'It is salt.'

'Taste it from the bottom. How is it?'

The son replied : 'It is salt.'

The father said : 'Throw it away and then wait on me.'

He did so; but the salt continued to exist.

Then the father said : 'Here also, in this body, indeed, you do not perceive the True (*Sat*), my son; but there indeed it is.

3. 'That which is the subtle essence, in it all that exists has its Self. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou, O Shvetaketu, art it.'

In the extract from the Chhândôgya Upanishad quoted above, we have a beautiful elucidation of the Upanishadic concept of Atman and the cardinal principle of the Upanishads which is summed up in the formula 'Thou art that' which means, in the words of Prof. Max Müller, that 'thou, man, art not different from that divine nature which pervades the whole world, as salt pervades the sea. You cannot see it,

you cannot handle it, but you can taste it and know that, though invisible, it is there. That divine essence, that which is alone true and real in this unreal or phenomenal world, is present likewise, though invisible, as the germ of life in the smallest seed, and without it there would be no seed, no fruit, no tree, as without God there would be no world.²⁵

The Upanishadic teaching about the Atman as the indwelling Truth, the Self and centre of all existence, which can only be intuitively grasped and is too subtle for ordinary intellectual comprehension, is beautifully echoed in the words of Browning in his poem, *Paracelsus* :

Truth lies within ourselves; it takes
no rise

From outward things, whate'er you
may believe.

There is an inmost centre in us all
Where Truth abides in fullness; and
to know

Rather consists in opening out a way
Whence the imprisoned splendour
may escape,

Than in effecting entry for a light
supposed to be without.

The Atman, then, as Prof. Ranade rightly says, is 'the ultimate category of existence to the Upanishadic seers.' Cosmologically, this Atman or Brahman—the two terms indicate the same principle—is the ultimate reality out of which are born all things in the world, by which all things created are sustained, and into which all things are absorbed in their dissolution. This ultimate reality, it is repeatedly pointed out in the Upanishads, is not to be equated with any of the forces or phenomena of Nature or any of the

gods who are the presiding deities over natural forces. The point is beautifully illustrated in the following story of the Kena Upanishad :

Once Brahman, they say, obtained a victory for the gods. The gods became elated by that victory of Brahman, and they thought, 'Verily is this victory ours, this glory is ours only.'

Brahman understood that false pride of theirs and appeared before them. But they did not recognize who that adorable spirit was.

They said to Agni : 'O ! Jatavedas ! find out who this adorable spirit is.' 'Yes' said Agni.

He ran to It and Brahman asked him : 'Who art thou?' 'I am Agni, the famous Jatavedas' was the reply.

'What power do you possess' asked the spirit. 'I can burn all that exists on earth' said Agni.

Thereupon Brahman put a straw before Agni asking him to burn it. Agni approached it with all his might, but was unable to burn it. He came back to the gods and said : 'I could not know who this adorable spirit is.'

The gods then asked Vayu : 'O Vayu, find out who this adorable spirit is.' 'Yes' said Vayu and approached. Brahman similarly asked Vayu "Who art thou, and what power is thine?"

'I am Vayu, the famous Matarishwan and I can sweep away all that exists on earth' was the reply. Brahman putting up a straw before him, said 'Take this away.' Vayu put forth all his might but was unable to take it up. He came back to the gods and said : 'I could not know who this adorable spirit is.'

The gods next deputed Indra or Maghavan, but on Indra's approach Brahman disappeared and Indra found himself no less baffled.

²⁵ *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*
p. 140.

Indra then asked Uma of exquisite beauty and adorned with golden ornaments : 'Who is this adorable spirit?' She replied : 'It is Brahman. The glory

that is yours is in reality Brahman's.' Thus he knew the adorable spirit was Brahman.

(To be continued)

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

(Concluded from the previous issue)

Then came the period of supreme depression. The boys who were children of the Master gathered together day and night. Their words were reminiscences of their years with him; their thoughts were of him; their worship was to him; their lives were lived in his name. Many of them were accustomed to the comparative ease and comfort of well-to-do families. But their deep devotion to the ideal made them face hardships unflinchingly. Sashi played no small part in holding the young band together and in regulating the routine of life to be followed by them. He would force them to rise from their meditation to partake of food. He would send them to repose by force when they continued hour after hour into the night the chanting of the praises of God. He would be the earliest to rise and to call on the others to arise and awake.

The parents of the boys came and attempted to take them back to their homes, they would not yield. Sashi's father came, begged and threatened, but to no purpose. The son said, 'The world and home are to me as a place infested with tigers.' The time came when the boys decided to renounce the world formally by taking the monastic vows and performing their own death ceremonies. They changed their names. Sashi became Ramakrishnananda. The leader of the young band wanted to have that name for himself but thought that Sashi had a better claim to it. Others went on itineraries

adopting the wandering life of the monk. Swami Ramakrishnananda stuck on to the holy spot where the Master's relics were temporarily enshrined. Worshipping the Master and keeping the monastery as the centre to which the wanderers would occasionally return were the duties which Ramakrishnananda assigned to himself. He would personally attend to all the items of worship; he would bring water from the Ganges, gather flowers and prepare the food to be offered. He would not take any food that was not offered to the Master.

The whole soul of devotion entered into Swami Ramakrishnananda. Others were transported into superhuman joy and into the very vision of God by the enflaming spirit of his enthusiasm. Hours were passed in devotion and days and nights, and it was this unparalleled devotion which formed the spirit which has become externally expressed as the Ramakrishna Order. The leader urged by the Divine Spirit left the shores of India. On hearing the news, the brother monks deeply felt the separation. Yet they knew that he had merely obeyed the Divine Command. Then came news of his brilliant success at the Parliament of Religions and his preaching work in America. Whenever the leader wrote to his brother monks he would address the message to Swami Ramakrishnananda, who indeed had become the 'pillar' of the monastery.

Now let us turn our attention to Swami Ramakrishnananda's missionary work in South India. He whose heart was centred in devotion and the worship of the Master was commanded by the leader to preach the religion and philosophy of the Vedanta. The great heart had to become the mighty intellect. It may be for this very reason that the leader directed Swami Ramakrishnananda to go to Madras. We had already remarked earlier how this apostle to the South stood in relation to the field chosen for his missionary labours. A combination of deep devotion and keen intellect is something very rare. But this very rare type was needed for the work in South India and it was the good fortune of that province to get Swami Ramakrishnananda. The Mission work in the South now stands as a noble edifice admired by all and giving shelter to aspirants on the spiritual path, to students and to all who seek the consolation which religion alone can give. But let us bear in mind that the strong foundation for this imposing edifice was firmly laid by the great monk, the first apostle of the Ramakrishna Order to Madras. The Mission work in South India is spread over several districts and is carried on by many centres, the genesis of all of them can be traced back to the hand of Swami Ramakrishnananda.

Pioneering work is always accompanied by many difficulties. Homeless, alone and often foodless the pioneer worker has to toil hard; he has to meet many disappointing and discouraging situations which would try his patience very much. But the protecting hand of the Deity is always there, manifesting itself much more than it does after the work has grown and men rally round to co-operate in the work, feeling it an honour to render such help and co-operation.

Swami Ramakrishnananda went to Madras in 1897. At first he was housed in a small building near the Ice House, from where he had to shift to some rooms in the Ice House itself. A little later when the house was auctioned away by the owner, the Swami had to stay in an outhouse of the same building at great personal inconvenience. It was in 1907 that a permanent house for the Math was constructed on a small site in Brodie's Road, Mylapore. The house was a simple one-storeyed building consisting of four rooms, a spacious hall, kitchen and outhouses. The Swami was delighted when at last there was a permanent place, where the Master's worship could be carried on uninterruptedly. He said, 'This is a fine house for Sri Ramakrishna to live in. Realizing that he occupies it, we must keep it very clean and very pure. We should take care not to disfigure the walls by driving in nails or otherwise.' This building has since been demolished and in its place stands a much larger building, providing more and better accommodation. But the spirit of the great soul is still there and will continue to be there. Brick and mortar belong to the class of perishable things, but the love and devotion exhibited by human souls belong to the eternal undying verities of existence.

In the early days in Madras the Swami had to work hard and often face difficult financial situations. He had to cook his own food and do service in the shrine; he had to conduct classes in various parts of the city. He remained unmoved under all difficulties and never approached anyone for help. The Master was his sole refuge. He would place his difficulties before his heart's Deity and plead with Him as a child does with the mother. His habits were extremely regular and his whole life was disciplined. As a rule, he would begin the

day's work with the reading of the Gita and the Vishnu-Sahasranama. The codes of conduct and religious rituals prescribed in the Scriptures were to him inviolable and full of meaning. His faith in the ancient law givers and the sages who formulated the religious rites was based upon the conviction that as men of God-realization they had no selfish ends and whatever they gave was for the good of the world. He was very punctual and would be in the class-room five minutes before the appointed time. The lesson would be conducted with the same earnestness and zeal whether the audience was large or small. In training the young monastic workers entrusted to his care, he would endeavour to equip them for a life of simplicity and devotion making them models of patience and self-sacrifice.

In the matter of diet he was extremely orthodox. The Master encouraged him in this, knowing that it would be conducive to his spiritual growth. He always made it a point to give devotees who visited the Math, a little Prasadam before they left; for he knew that holy food has a purifying effect upon the mind. He would encourage others to cultivate regular habits. If he saw a student shaking his legs, he would gently tell him, 'Stop shaking your legs, it is not conducive to well-being.' If he saw another standing and drinking a glass of water, he would ask him to sit and drink. If he saw a student morose, he would suggest that he should cultivate a cheerful attitude.

He was uncompromising in his devotion to the life and teachings of the Master. Finding him holding high the ideals of renunciation and fearing lest some of the young listeners may be attracted to the ideal, someone suggested that certain devotees who were subscribing towards the maintenance of the Math may not like the Swami's teaching

such things to the young people. On hearing these remarks Swami Ramakrishnananda exclaimed, 'Am I to preach other than what I learned from my Master? I shall very gladly find accommodation in a pial of one of my students' houses.'

Absolute surrender to the will of God characterized his life and actions. In him the path of knowledge and the path of devotion met, thereby showing that the loftiest knowledge led to the most intense devotion. To an inquirer who asked him what steadiness in the practice of devotion meant, he replied, 'Steadiness in devotion means that though you may be busy with many things, still your mind is always turned towards God. It should be like the needle of a compass; the needle may swing a little to this side or that, but it always has a tendency to point back to true north.'

In July, 1903, Swami Ramakrishnananda accepted an invitation from the Vedanta Society of Ulsoor in Bangalore and stayed there from the 19th of July to the 9th of August. About four thousand people including fifty-three Bhajana parties received him and conducted him in a procession to his residence. He delivered about a dozen public lectures and held question classes morning and evening. A strong wave of spirituality was raised by the force of the Swami's personality and teachings.

In October of that year, the Swami carried the message of Sri Ramakrishna to Mysore and delivered five lectures including an address in Sanskrit defending the views of his Master on the divergent interpretation of the Vedanta. In Bangalore, the interest created by the Swami was kept up by the Vedanta Society. In August, 1904, the Swami was again invited to open a permanent centre. He delivered a series of lectures, opened some classes and left Swami Atmananda in charge of the work.

In August 1906, the Swami again visited Bangalore and Mysore with Swami Abhedananda. During this visit the foundation-stone of the Bangalore Ashrama was laid. After the building was erected Swami Ramakrishnananda invited His Holiness Swami Brahmanandaji, the President of the Mission to open it. Swami Ramakrishnananda also visited Trivandrum and spent about a month there and created enthusiasm in the mind of the people.

The publication work of the Madras centre was begun by him by the printing of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, *The Inspired Talks* and some of his own works. Of his writings *The Universe and Man* and *The Soul of Man* give lucid expositions of some of the fundamental principles of Vedanta philosophy and religion. *Sri Krishna the Pastoral and King-maker* and *The Life of Ramanuja* in Bengali are studies of the hero as God-man and as religious reformer. He also found time to contribute a number of articles to the *Prabuddha Bharata*, the *Brahmavadin* and the *Udbodhan*. A good mathematician and an erudite scholar, he possessed intellectual powers of a very high order. The problems of the inner life engaged his attention. Delving deep into the realms of mind, he reached the solution of many problems of the inner life. Full of God-consciousness, his mind rested on the solitude of the sage. In daily life, his spirit of devotion manifested a firm faith in the Master, who was to him identical with the Supreme. He felt the living presence of the Master in his likeness. His worship, therefore, partook of the nature of loving service to a beloved person in flesh. There was no place in his consciousness for anything but the Master. He was dead wholly to himself and alive only in Sri Ramakrishna.

Swami Ramakrishnananda was a man

of gigantic proportions. His features, however, were plain except when they were lighted by his smile that transfigured them and lent them a rare spiritual beauty. He was not an eloquent speaker, but his sincerity and thorough grasp of spiritual realities made his speeches very impressive. He was always at his best in the conversational method of teaching. His fame as a teacher of Vedanta spread far and wide. We have already made mention of his evangelical work in South India. Even such distant places as Burma and Bombay sent invitations to him. He visited these places and achieved great success.

His great heart melted when he saw the sufferings of the poor. He took charge of a helpless orphan boy whose relatives had all perished of plague at Coimbatore. The plight of some poor students who came to the city of Madras for study moved him to take measures to provide lodging and later on food for them. This was the beginning of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home of Madras which is now well known throughout the length and breadth of the country.

On the 5th of July 1902, the news flashed over India that Swami Vivekananda had passed into Final Realization. It reached Madras and Swami Ramakrishnananda in the midst of his work. But he already had infinite solace in this bereavement and that from the departed leader himself. For on the very night that Swami Vivekananda passed away, Swami Ramakrishnananda as he was sitting in meditation pondering on the Reality beyond death and beyond life, heard a voice ringing out clearly 'Sashi! Sashi! I have spat 'out the body.' It was the voice of the leader, Swami Vivekananda, who appeared before him and had but a little while before entered the domain of Highest

illumination. That fired the soul of him who heard. He redoubled his efforts. Word reached his fellow monks that he was working so strenuously that grave results were to be feared, should he have a 'break-down.' But the worker paying no attention to the warnings, gave out his very soul to the work. It told on the body of the sage. Symptoms of a fatal disease made themselves evident, but he paid no attention. His whole mind was centred in the Spirit. He had long forgotten that the body existed. Finally those who were near and loved him most took him to specialists. They, in their turn, pronounced the disease as fatal.

Word was sent to Calcutta and his fellow monks begged him to pass his last days with them. This he felt was best. He had thought of it, but not until the command came from the President of the Mission did he leave Madras. He was housed at the monastery in Baghbazar and the most noted physicians visited him of their own accord. His condition grew worse.

Most remarkable, however, was the

strength of his spirit which burst forth in eloquent discourse concerning the soul and God, even whilst the body suffered most. One who loved him dearly, hearing him speak in the distressed state of his body asked him to desist. 'Why?' came the reply, 'When I speak of the Lord all pain leaves me, I forget the body.' It is said that when sages are about to pass away they become most eager to convey unto mankind their spiritual realization. This had been true of Buddha. Of Sri Ramakrishna it was true. Of Swami Vivekananda it had been also true. And with Swami Ramakrishnananda it was again true. Even in delirium his mind and his voice were given to God. 'Durga, Durga,' 'Shiva, Shiva,' and the name of his Master were ever on his lips. As the days passed and his condition grew worse, the monks knew that the time for Mahasamadhi was close at hand. At last the end came in wonderful peace. At that moment the presence of the Lord was felt. The death-chamber had become a tabernacle, it had become the temple of illumination.

'Why does a God-lover renounce everything for the sake of Him whom he loves? The moth after seeing a light has no mind to return to darkness; the ant dies in the heap of sugar but does not turn back. So the God-lover gladly sacrifices his life for the attainment of Divine bliss, and cares for nothing else.'

—Sri Ramakrishna

NOTES AND COMMENTS

CHRISTIANITY IN EUROPE

The Prabuddha Bharata of July 1985 contains an article on the 'Revival of Aryan Faith in Europe' contributed by Prof. Ernest P. Horowitz. While giving the causes that brought about the decline of Christianity in Germany and Russia, the learned professor observes as follows: 'The two most troublesome, yet most dynamic nations of Europe, the Reich and Russia, both antagonize the "Capitalistic Church" with its rigid creed and frigid traditions. Both struggle for a heroic faith more humane and less dogmatic.'

The current issue (July 8) of the *Guardian of Madras* contains one installment of the report of a lecture delivered by Mr. P. Chenchiah on 'The Future of Christianity in India.' It strikes us as a very thoughtful contribution to the study of the interesting question: 'How far the inner strength of a religious faith can be weakened by the adventitious aids adopted for its propagation?' Referring to the decline of Christianity in Europe Mr. Chenchiah observes: 'Numerical Christianity tends to become nominal, formal, self-satisfied, powerless Christianity. In the recent triumphs of secularism in Europe, we note that communities that have yielded easily are those that boast of strongest churches and traditions. In Russia, the Russian Church had almost dictatorial sway over the crown and subjects. Yet the whole structure of Christianity collapsed there within two decades. The Church was unable to withstand persecution and could not put forward a moral justification for its existence before the bar of conscience. One half of Spain, the pride

and glory of the Catholic Church, has slid away into secularism without much effort. In Italy, the citadel of Catholicism, the Pope is a prisoner in Vatican and his moral sway over his flock has diminished extraordinarily. Germany, the birth place of Protestantism, finds itself unequal to a struggle with the State. Thus the stability and ancestry of Christian Society was no guarantee of its continuity and recuperating power. Christianity loses in stamina when completely contained in social structure. The religion of Christ is in its nature a religion of spirit, expanding only when gaseous, free, not when solidified and crystallized in social institutions.' Earlier referring to the conversion of Europe, Mr. Chenchiah says, 'Kings adopted Christianity and the subjects followed them as a matter of course. The conquest of Christ followed close on the conquest of Christian kings. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries we witnessed a rapid dissolution of Christianity as the early centuries beheld its rapid expansion. Mass conversions lack moral stamina and easily succumb to new adverse forces. Christianity took ten or twelve centuries to conquer Europe. It has taken less than two centuries to lose its supremacy in Europe. Bare quantity devoid of quality, if easy to gain, is equally easy to lose.'

Comparing the views of Prof. Horowitz and Mr. Chenchiah we find some points of agreement and a few differences. The growth of scientific knowledge and the development of political consciousness among a people may militate against an established religion if the religion is too rigid to accom-

moderate the new ideas. When the Catholic Church rejected as heresy certain truths which appealed to the minds of its adherents as valid and necessary, a schism resulted and Protestantism came into being. The process continues. Again the French Revolution testified to the fact that hunger is a more potent force than morality and religion. If the ruling classes in Russia allied with the priests robbed the peasant of his food-stuffs and thus brought hunger to his door, the resulting revolution is bound to sweep away the ruling classes and the priests. Germany after Versailles defeated and humiliated felt that she was played out by Christian nations. The gospel of humble submission and self-surrender appeared to her unsuitable for national regeneration. There was also the hatred of the Jews and of capitalism. She found in the faith of her remote Aryan ancestors something virile and life-giving and with German thoroughness has carried out the process of Aryanization.

CHRISTIANITY IN JAPAN

The issue of the *Guardian* referred to above contains an article on 'Japan and Christian Missions' and also an editorial on 'Japanized Christianity.' Japan, as we know, was until about a century ago a country closed to foreigners. Finding that isolation was not the best way for growth, she admitted foreigners who were friendly to the Japanese people and who might not hinder the national aspirations of Japan. The Eastern nations are as a rule tolerant in matters of religion, but when they have reason to suspect that missionaries attempt to influence adversely the social and national life of the country, the instinct of self-preservation prompts them to restrict the field of work of the missions.

Evidently some such conditions have arisen in Japan. We quote from the editorial of the *Guardian*. 'The Japanese State cannot tolerate any divided allegiance among its subjects. All Japanese, whether Buddhist, Shinto or Christian, are pre-eminently Japanese. They must uphold the national policies, such as the New Order of Japanese authorities in Southern Asia; including the war in China euphemistically called the Chinese Incident by Japanese Christianity; they must support the dominant militarism of the State; they must accept the worship of the Emperor and do homage to Shinto shrines, not merely as a harmless or patriotic gesture, but as acts of profound submission and they must acquiesce in the Korean policy; as well as in the Chinese and Manchurian expansion. These are stubborn facts which foreign missions in Japan are powerless to alter and to which Japanese Christians have given enthusiastic welcome as nationals do in Western countries to the acts of their own governments. The beam is in the eye of all powerful nations, mutual accusations cannot remove them. Granted these overwhelming national factors, what could the Japanese Christians do? They have reacted in the only manner possible to them and consistent with their nationalism and as prudence suggested.'

Buddhism which was taken to China and Japan from India played a more glorious role for the great Buddhist Emperor who sent the first missions to these lands, had neither territorial ambitions nor did he desire for any sphere of influence for economic exploitation. The American and the European missionaries in Japan may be excellent men but they are identified with their nationals who are interested in Eastern countries for purposes other than saving the souls of the heathens.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

LIFE OF VIJAYKRISHNA. By BISHNU CHARAN DAS. Published by Jogan Das on behalf of Sri Sri Vijaykrishna Math, Benares. Pp. 336. Price Rs. 4/-.

Vijaykrishna Goswami was one of those luminaries that appeared in the spiritual firmament of Bengal in the nineteenth century. It was a golden age for the land and the light of spiritual wisdom that originated in Bengal penetrated even to distant parts of India. Vijaykrishna played a considerable part in that spiritual revival. He was an undaunted seeker after truth, the burning passion for which did not allow him any rest till he reached the goal. Coming of the line of the great Advaitacharya of Santipur he was a Vaishnava by instinct and temperament, but true to the spirit of the time a rationalist in outlook. The life-current of the lofty religion of Vaishnavism preached by Sri Chaitanya was flowing at a low ebb and could offer no attraction for the discriminative mind of Vijaykrishna. The sincerity and love for truth that marked the Brahmo Samaj of the time and the reforming zeal exhibited in its adherents attracted the attention of Vijaykrishna and he joined the movement. But it was only a temporary phase in his life. The formless God of the Brahmo religion could not satisfy for long the deeper hankerings of his soul. The potential Vaishnava that lay hidden in him was asserting itself, and he was mad for the love of God that the Gopis of Brindavana had for Sri Krishna. He turned to the path of Vaishnavism again but with a wider outlook and richer experience that cut at the root of all dogmatism and narrowness in him. His later life was destined to reveal the infinite glory of the religion of Vaishnavism preached by Sri Chaitanya and bring about a new re-awakening in it.

The volume under review presents in an admirable way the gradual spiritual unfolding of this great life. Supernatural phenomena that exhibit themselves in the life of a saint always occupy an insignificant position in the scale of spiritual values. But superficial observers mistake them for the very essence of that life and miss the real spiritual glory of it. With characteristic

insight into the real significance of a spiritual life the author has generally avoided the supernatural occurrences that took place in the life of Vijaykrishna and has thereby brought into broad relief the spiritual excellence of that great life and the important role it played in the spiritual regeneration of the time.

We cannot but make mention of one glaring omission in the book. Vijaykrishna came in very intimate touch with Sri Ramakrishna whose influence was not a less potent factor in the formation of Vijaykrishna's spiritual life, and the catholic spirit and liberal outlook that he possessed. But no mention of it has been made in the book. Let us quote an incident related in the *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrta* written by M. that will bear out our contention and give a fair idea of the attitude that Vijaykrishna used to hold towards Sri Ramakrishna and the uncommon nature of the relation that existed between them. The incident took place on Sunday, 25th October, 1885. M. was present on the occasion. Vijaykrishna Goswami came from Dacca to see Sri Ramakrishna who was then ill and was staying at Shyampukur in Calcutta where he had been brought for treatment. Mahina Chakravarty who was present there asked Vijaykrishna, "Well, sir, you have just returned from a pilgrimage and have visited many places. Let us hear of the experiences you have gathered."

Vijaykrishna: "What am I to say! I now see that everything exists here where I sit now. It is of no use to go about wandering. In some places we may come about only one, two, or at best three per cent of what is manifest here. It is only here that I witness the perfect manifestation of a spiritual life.

"It is difficult to know him unless he himself reveals his true nature to us. But it is here that we find the perfect manifestation (of that in search of which we go out on pilgrimages).

(With folded hands, to Sri Ramakrishna) "Now I have understood who you are! You need not tell me about it!"

Sri Ramakrishna (in a superconscious mood): "Let it then be so."

Vijaykrishna: "Yes, I have understood."

And then he fell at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna and took up one of the feet and placed it on his breast. Lost in Samadhi Sri Ramakrishna was sitting motionless like a statue.'

No further comment is necessary. But we do not, on that account, minimize the value of the book. It is one of the best studies that has so far been made of the life of Vijaykrishna and we whole-heartedly recommend it to the public.

GRAVE DANGER TO THE HINDUS.

By 'AN OBSCURE HINDU.' Published by Mr. K. C. Bhalla, Editor, 'Harbinger', Puthiyara, Malabar, South India. Pp. xvii + 274. Price Re. 1-8 As. Postage extra.

Mr. G. V. Ketkar, B.A., LL.B., Editor, *The Mahratta*, Poona, who contributes the introduction summarizes in a lucid manner the arguments put forward by the author regarding the need for greater vigilance and organized action on the part of Hindus to defend their religion and culture. Here are a few extracts from the Introduction. 'It is true, as the author rightly points out that our culture and philosophy have made us abhor everything that tends to disturb the natural peace of our earthly existence but it is far from true to conclude from this that we are a spent force, that we are a pack of cowards who for the sake of safety will surrender everything to the enemy. If India fell a prey to numerous invasions, if she succumbed to a series of conquerors, it was because she could not with her numberless scattered kingdoms develop unity in the face of an approaching enemy. Brave, but disunited, she fell but she will not commit the blunder again . . . The author after analysing the causes of the present unrest in the country, goes on to consider the contribution of our Sannyasins and religious heads and also our Hindu princes to the cause of Hindu solidarity. . . . The heads of our religious Mutts seem to have forgotten the wise example of Swami Vivekananda who lived not in cloistered seclusion but in the midst of men and women, understanding their problems and guiding their lives towards the haven of peace and contentment . . . A regenerated Hindustan will find its Hindu princes a bulwark of national strength, will find them the upholders of the great national tradition and the great Hindu cause . . . What, is wanted to-day is "the revival of the Gita

spirit in the country." There is no better method of carrying on the regeneration of the country, no surer method of regaining that militant manliness which is so essential not merely for our continued existence as a nation, but also for the honour and glory of Bharata Varsha.'

The main themes developed by the author are those that are referred to in the above extracts. The book is written in the style of informal conversations addressed to a circle of friends. The author has felt deeply over the problems that he discusses in his book. He is sincere and earnest in feeling that something ought to be done to counteract the disruptive forces in the body-politic. He equally feels that something should be done to strengthen the Hindu faith. There is a political problem and a religious problem; in spite of mutual reactions, both are distinct problems. In the political sphere the two communities have to adjust their differences by negotiation or arbitration. In the religious sphere they have to conserve their own spiritual values and as citizens of a democratic state cultivate an attitude of tolerance and learn to respect each other's religion. In both spheres good will is necessary. The Mughal Empire and the Hindu Empire are memories which can be cherished with pleasure by both Hindus and Muslims.

The book is thought-provoking and we commend it to those who are interested in the current problems of India.

PLEA FOR A NEW WORLD ORDER.

By NARAYANA KAUSIKA. Published by N. G. V. Aiyer, Nemmara (Cochin), S. India. Pp. 147. Price Re. 1-4 As.

The book under review is the sixth and concluding volume of the author's 'New Evolution of Man' series and aims to set out broadly 'a new scientific philosophy of life and a material dispensation, called the "New Socialism," which is the resultant of a synthesis of Individualism and Socialism, Spiritualism and Rationalism, Religion and Science, the Old and the New.' It is an interesting study in Gandhian Truth and Non-violence which the author considers to be best suited for adoption as the basis of the New World Order which he visualizes. He would have us believe that the panacea for all the problems of the world lies in an intelligent and effective organization of society based on genuine scientific and moral values, and accordingly he outlines

a plan of social and political organization for world reconstruction. The author wants a root and branch change in the present state of things, social and political, and insists on having everything 'new,'—new leadership, new world order, new Socialism, new universal religion and new society. The New Socialism, a synthesis of Gandhism and Socialism as they are commonly understood, is to rest on three fundamental principles: Charter of food, trusteeship of wealth and world economic control. This evidently calls for a 'new cultural leadership.'

In the present juncture of the history of the human race nothing is more needed than peace and harmony. Every lover of peace and happiness fondly hopes that when the present conflagration subsides the world will witness the ushering in of a new order. The intention of the author in publishing this book is to offer his own practical suggestions for the fashioning of a New World Order and stimulate interest in leading individuals and organizations for the realization of the same. He is a fluent and thoughtful writer and possesses a thorough knowledge of the subject he treats of. His writings have evoked appreciation from well-known personalities like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Prof. Radhakrishnan and H. G. Wells. But the author has raised controversial issues of a wide magnitude and it is not possible here to enter into a thorough discussion of them. The book is a creditable attempt to present the structure of a new organization of society.

THE FUTURE OF INDIA. By SISIR-KUMAR MITRA. *Published by Sri Aurobindo Library, 12, Kondichetty Street, G. T., Madras. Pp. 66. Price 10 As.*

A very valuable little book. It is based on Sri Aurobindo's writings and other works treating of Indian culture and civilization. The author points out the intrinsic values of Indian civilization and shows how they can be utilized for the building of the India of the future. Here are a few extracts: 'The world will receive its message of emancipation from India.' 'The going forth of Vivekananda, marked out by the Master as a heroic soul destined to take the world between his two hands and change it, was a first visible sign to the world that India was awake not only to survive but to conquer.' 'A great past ought to be followed by a greater future.'

MAITREYI. By SHUBHABRATA RAY CHAUDHURY. *Published by the author. Pp. 164. Price Rs. 2/-.*

It is a drama. The author has selected for his theme the conjugal union of the famous Upanishadic Rishi Yajnavalkya and his worthy wife Maitreyi. The background of events and incidents developed by the author has brought out quite prominently the characters of Maitreyi and Yajnavalkya as conceived by him. The language of the book is elegant and expressive.

DOES THE SOUL EXIST AFTER DEATH. By SWAMI ABHEDANANDA. *Published by the Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, 19B, Raja Rajkrishna Street, Calcutta. Pp. 20. Price 4 As.*

This beautiful brochure contains a brief but illuminating study of the Vedantic view of the immortality of the soul. The views of some of the well-known Western thinkers are also stated.

SRI SAI BABA'S CHARTERS AND SAYINGS. By B. V. NARASIMHASWAMY. *Copies can be had at T. V. C. Press, 1-1, Sebuddoss Street, Madras. Pp. 264. Price 12 As.*

Sri Sai Baba, the well-known saint of Shirdi, was a great mystic and a spiritually advanced soul. This book is full of interesting information regarding his miraculous powers and many instances are narrated to illustrate them.

BURMESE

MY MASTER. *Published by the Ramakrishna Mission Society, Rangoon, Burma.*

It is a translation in Burmese of the lecture that Swami Vivekananda delivered on Sri Ramakrishna at New York in 1896. That was perhaps the only occasion when he presented in full the life of his Master to a public audience and so it has a special significance of its own. The book is the first of its kind in the Burmese language and we congratulate the Society for undertaking this much-needed work and for the selection they have made for the first translation. The Burmese people will, we hope, avail of this opportunity to know of one whose life and message have created a revolution in the religious world.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, BENARES

The Home of Service was started as early as the year 1900. Since then it has grown slowly to its present stature of usefulness. It has eight departments of work now, and spends about Rs. 4,000/- a month, and ministers to about 80,000 patients every year. We present below a short summary of the report of its activities during the year 1940.

The indoor work of the Home comprises a General Hospital with 115 beds, a Refuge for invalid men with 25 beds, a Refuge for women invalids with 50 beds, arrangements for treatment of paralytic patients and provision for rendering relief to the needy.

The total number of cases treated in the General Hospital was 2,047. Of these 1,363 were cured, 208 relieved, 217 discharged otherwise, 126 died and 183 remained under treatment at the end of the year. The percentage of death is a little high because many dying cases, picked up from the road-side or other places, were admitted with a view to give them a homely environment so that they might die in peace. The daily average of cases was 110. The total number of surgical cases was 275 of which 225 were major cases. 173 patients were picked up from the road-side or the bathing ghats on the Ganges. The Refuge for invalid men could not accommodate more than 6 inmates for want of funds. 21 aged women invalids and 10 paralytic patients were provided with shelter, and the latter were treated with proper care. Food and shelter were given to 248 men and women.

The outdoor work consists of two Dispensaries—one at the Home of Service and the other at Shivalay, help to poor invalids and helpless ladies of respectable families, and special and occasional relief to the needy.

The total number of new patients treated in both the Dispensaries was 66,075 and the

total number of repeated cases was 1,49,067. The daily average attendance was 589 and the total number of surgical cases during the year was 855. Weekly and monthly relief in cash and kind was rendered to 241 persons and 1,990 people including students and stranded travellers were helped with books, food and other things as occasions demanded.

Finance : The total receipts for the year amounted to Rs. 96,493-2-7 and the expenditure to Rs. 66,899-13-10. So far as the General fund is concerned omitting sale of shares, endowments and encashments on the receipts side and investment on the expenditure side, the actual receipts and expenditure come roughly to Rs. 38,771/- and Rs. 41,252/- respectively which means the expenditure far exceeds the income.

Immediate needs : (1) Endowments for beds, each costing Rs. 4,000/- in the Surgical Ward, Rs. 3,000/- in the General Ward and Rs. 2,500/- in the Invalid Homes. (2) Bedding and clothing. (3) Rs. 8,000/- for a building for the Outdoor Dispensary. (4) Funds for general expenditure.

The number of poor people applying for relief in cash and kind has increased enormously. More striking even than this are the unfortunate victims of Beri Beri epidemic, who were rendered blind during 1936-37. The demands of these people have to be met in this age of crisis and transitions.

We hope such an institution as this will not be handicapped in the good work for want of funds and that generous public will come forward with contributions, which will be thankfully received and acknowledged by,

(1) The Hony. Asstt. Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Benares.

(2) The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, Bengal.

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

AT THE HOUSE OF RAJENDRA

The house of Rajendra Mitra is situated in Bechu Chatterjee Lane at Thanthania. On the day Manomohan held a festival in his house, Sriji Keshab requested Rajendra Babu to hold a similar one in his house also. Very gladly Rajendra made the necessary preparations.

To-day is Saturday, 10th December 1881. It has been decided that the festival is to take place to-day. There is great rejoicing, because many devotees will come; Keshab and other Brahmo devotees also are expected.

Umanath has brought the news to Rajendra that Brother Aghorenath, a Brahmo devotee, is dead. The death occurred in Lucknow at 2 p.m. on 8th December and the news was sent that very night by a telegram. On the succeeding day Umanath carried the news to Rajendra. Keshab and other Brahmo devotees are in mourning. Will they be able to come on Saturday? Rajendra has grown uneasy over it.

Ram says to Rajendra, ‘Why are you so anxious? Keshab Babu may not come. Sri Ramakrishna is coming, and do you not know that he always lives in a state of divine ecstasy and reveals to our consciousness the existence of God who is the source of all the happiness the world enjoys?’

Ram, Rajendra, Rajmohan and Manomohan meet Keshab. Keshab says, ‘Why, I did not say that I would not go! Sri Ramakrishna is coming, and should I not go? Surely I shall go. I am observing Ashaucha¹ and so I shall take my food separately.’

Keshab speaks with Rajendra and other devotees. A picture of Sri Ramakrishna merged in Samadhi is hung up in the room.

Rajendra (to Keshab): ‘Many are of opinion that Sri Ramakrishna

¹ A period of ‘uncleanness’ and mourning observed at the death of a near relative or brother in faith.

Paramahansa is an Incarnation of Chaitanya.'

Keshab (pointing to the picture of Samadhi): 'Such a state of divine ecstasy can rarely be seen. Jesus, Muhammad and Chaitanya used to experience such a state.'

At 8 p.m. Sri Ramakrishna comes to the house of Manomohan. After a little rest he partakes of some light refreshments. Surendra says, 'You wanted to see a camera; let us go and see it.' Surendra takes him in a carriage to the Bengal Photography Studio. The photographer shows him how a photograph is taken. The surface of the plate is coated with silver nitrate and the impression falls on it.

As they take the photograph of the Master, he enters into a state of Samadhi.

The Master has come now to the house of Rajendra Mitra. Rajendra is a retired Deputy Magistrate.

Srijut Mahendra Goswami is reading the Bhagavatam in the courtyard of the house. Many devotees are present. Keshab has not come as yet. The Master speaks.

Sri Ramakrishna (to devotees): 'Why should it be impossible to realize God even in a householder's life? Of course, it is very difficult. I have come to-day by the bridge at Baghbazar. In how many ways it has been tied! The bridge will not be affected in the least even if one of the cords fail. There are other chains that will hold it up. Likewise, the worldly people have many ties. They cannot escape except through the grace of God.'

'The realization of God rids man of all his fears. There are two aspects of His Maya—Vidya and Avidya. Perfect detachment can be attained only after one has realized God. True realization takes place in the state of Paramahansa. He is like a swan that can

take out milk from water if they are mixed together. It is possible only with a swan and not any other bird.'

A devotee: 'What then is the way out for a householder?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'The way lies in having faith in the words of the Guru and making them the guidance of life. Stick firmly to his instructions just as one holds the pole when whirling round it, and do the duties of the world.'

'The Guru should not be looked upon as man. It is Sachchidananda Itself which comes in the form of the Guru. The grace of the Guru makes it possible for a man to see his Ishta or Chosen Deity. The Guru then merges in the Ishta.'

'Nothing is impossible with sincere faith. A Guru had a son. The disciples were making preparations, according to their capacity, for the Annaprashana² ceremony of the son. Among the disciples was a poor widow. She had a cow and brought a small pot of milk to offer. The Guru had thought that she would undertake to supply all the milk and curd that would be required. Being, therefore, indignant, he threw away what she had brought and said, "Couldst thou not drown thyself in water?" The woman took this to be the command of the Guru and went to a river to plunge herself into it. Just at that moment Narayana appeared before her and said graciously, "Take this pot, there is curd in it. It will give an incessant supply and your Guru will be pleased." The Guru was struck dumb when the pot was presented to him. He listened to all that had taken place, came to the river and said to the lady, "I shall plunge into this water and give up my life if you do not show Narayana to me." Narayana

² The ceremony when a child takes rice for the first time.

made His appearance but the Guru could not see. The lady, then, prayed to Him, "O Lord, if Thou dost not reveal Thyself to my Guru and if he dies, I shall also put an end to my life." Narayana, then, revealed Himself to the Guru for once.

'See, how through her devotion she could herself get the vision of God and have that for her Guru also !

'So, the saying goes,—“Even if my Guru takes to drink, he is the same Nityananda Rai, my holy preceptor.”

'All are anxious to become Teachers. Few indeed are willing to be disciples.

But, you see, rain-water does not stand on a high top. It is only on low ground that it collects.

'One should receive with faith the sacred name that the Guru gives and devote oneself to spiritual practices.

'It is said that a pearl-oyster keeps itself ready to catch a drop of rain-water when the star Svâti is in the ascendant. As soon as it catches the raindrop it dives down to the bottomless depth of the sea and settles there till it fashions a pearl out of the rain-drop.'

SONNET SEQUENCE TO SRI RAMAKRISHNA

V

Who learns through love how difficult it was
 For You to hold Your mind to this gross plane,
 How bent it was on soaring through the pass
 Of time and space, and losing form again;
 How in Your eyes this world, and worlds between,
 Were looking-glasses that illusively
 Reflected Consciousness, the pure unseen
 Substratum, as divine diversity;
 Who learns through love how in You, who were God,
 Gradations of existence lay concealed,
 How in Your mouth the cosmos from a clod
 To Brahmaloeka could have been revealed,—
 Shall lay his world in ashes at Your feet,
 And go with You to live in love's retreat.

--Dorothy Kruger

THE NEED FOR COURAGE AND OPTIMISM

BY SWAMI TURIYANANDA

(*Extracted from a letter*)

It is said that the great devotee Rupa Goswami once sent through a Brahmin a letter to his brother Sanatan which contained only these words, namely, Ya-ri, Ra-la, I-ram, Na-ya. That was enough to acquaint Sanatan with the intention of his brother. Ya-ri etc. signified the following:—

Ya-ri : Yadupateh kva gata Mathura-puri, Ra-la : Raghupateh kva gatottara-Koshala, I-ram : Iti vichintya kuru svamanah sthiram, Na-ya : Na sadidam jagadityavadharaya (Where is Krishna's city of Mathura gone and where is the Ajodhya of Rama now? Dwelling on this settle your mind. Firmly grasp this that the world is not eternal).

Of course, these few lines proved apt and enough for Rupa's brother, for he had lost reason, being intoxicated with the wine of sense objects. But your case is different, because you are convinced that the world is mere child's play and insubstantial. The Lord alone is its substance and all in all. Further you have also arrived at the settled belief that the only duty of the individual is to pray and call on Him. So you need not be particularly told, 'Firmly grasp this that the world is not eternal.' You very well know that the Lord has been, as it were, pressingly solicitous in declaring in the Gita: 'Having obtained this transient, joyless world, worship thou Me.'

However, I can understand your remorse and self-reproach that you are not able for fear of life to act up to the following: 'Having cut asunder this firm-rooted Ashvattha with the

strong axe of non-attachment—then that Goal is to be sought for.' (Gita XV. 3-4).

That many children of Mother used to do these things is evident from the songs of great men like Ramprasad, Kamalakanta and others. But it is also seen that they have repeatedly said that in whatever situation Mother chooses to place one is the best. They only wanted to remember the Mother, no matter in whatever situation She might have placed them. The Master used to sing:—

'O Mother Kali, it is indeed fortunate if I don't forget Thee, howsoever and wheresoever Thou mayest place me—whether I am smothered with ashes or decked with jewels, whether I shelter myself under a tree or sit on a princely throne.'

He used to say, 'The kitten is sometimes placed on an ash-heap and sometimes on a mattress.' He would further say, 'Mother knows what situation will be the best for the young one.' He is the Good; whatever He does is for the best. The devotee seeks nothing. They don't accept the varieties of freedom like Sāṁipya, Sālokya (nearness to God, inhabiting the same realm of immortality with God) etc. even when offered. On the contrary they only crave for service to the Lord. You know it perfectly well. Our Master could never stand the word sin and used to forbid specially to regard anybody as a sinner. Rather he used to teach one to say to oneself, 'I have taken His name, what fear or anxiety

can there be for me?' 'O listen, of whom should he be afraid whose Mother is the Brahman?' You have said it rightly that He can smash up and refashion everything in a moment. Why, He has done it and has been doing it already! You are realizing this well in the depths of your heart. This is no fancy of a crazy fellow. It is very true. Can there be any 'why' as regards Him? He is the infinite ocean of mercy and beyond all why's. And He alone, the fulfiller of the desires of devotees, is our past, present and future. Why should we obey any other future?

'I am the Self, O Gudakesha, existing in the heart of all beings; I am the beginning, the middle, and also the end of all beings.' (Gita X. 20).

These sayings of the Lord are our proof, shelter and the only refuge. So why should we not say—

'I know Thou art Good, I find its evidence in every twinkling of the eye. Keep me in happiness or misery as Thou ordainest, Thou art Good. Whatever else Thou doest, my Lord, forsake me never. This is my hope. O Lord, come and dwell in my heart, there is no doubt that Good will prevail.'

'What we want is Shraddha. Unfortunately, it has nearly vanished from India, and this is why we are in our present state. What makes the difference between man and man is the difference in this Shraddha and nothing else. What makes one man great and another weak and low is this Shraddha. It is fear that is the great cause of misery in the world. It is fear that is the greatest of all superstitions. It is fear that is the cause of our woes, and it is fearlessness that brings heaven even in a moment. . . . Have faith in yourselves, and stand up on that faith and be strong; that is what we need. Why is it that we, three hundred and thirty millions of people, have been ruled for the last one thousand years by any and every handful of foreigners who chose to walk over our prostrate bodies? Because they had faith in themselves and we had not. Give up the awful disease that is creeping into our national blood, that idea of ridiculing everything, that loss of seriousness. Give that up. Be strong and have this Shraddha, and everything else is bound to follow.'

—Swami Vivekananda

RELIGIOUS REVIVAL IN MEDIEVAL INDIA

The search for the supreme truth begun by the Vedic seers and carried on by the Upanishadic sages and the great Badarayana found its fulfilment in the Advaita philosophy of Shankara. He is, therefore, the last great figure in the religious thought of Ancient India. Ramanuja (1027--1137 A. D.) begins a new epoch. Scholars outside Tamil-land may not be fully aware of the great debt which Ramanuja owes to Dravidian thought. He is the inheritor of the spiritual treasures garnered by Satakôpa, the great Vaishnava mystic. Satakopa, who is lovingly referred to as Nammalvar, 'our saint' by Southern Vaishnavas, enunciated sublime truths which came to him as a result of his profound spiritual realizations. The race which produced many lovers of God has given the world in Satakopa, not only an ardent devotee of God but also a deep thinker and an exquisite poet. His *Tiruvâmozhi* reaches the high-water mark of Tamil poetry. *Vâmozhi* derived from *vâimai*, 'truth' means 'the word of truth,' of absolute revealed truth, as different from relative truth reached by mere ratiocination. In classical Tamil this word was used to denote the Vedas. *Tiru* means 'sacred,' 'auspicious.' *Tiruvaimozhi*, the 'Sacred Book of Revealed Truths' is placed by Southern Vaishnavism on the same high pedestal as the Vedas. Ramanuja himself has given directions for its regular study and chanting in temples and assemblies. He was fully steeped in its wisdom. Vedanta Deshika, the Vaishnava philosopher of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries called *Tiruvaimozhi* the *Dramidopanishad*. Nammalvar composed also three other works: the

Thiruviruttam, the *Tiruvâsiriyaṁ* and the *Periya Tiruvandâdi*.

Madhurakavi, counted as one of the Alvars, canonized saints of Southern Vaishnavism, was making a pilgrimage in the North. Standing on the banks of the Ganges, he saw a great light in the southerly direction. Following it, even as the Magi followed the star that appeared in the East, he arrived at a southern city, ever after known as Alvar-tiru-nagari. There, under the spreading branches of a tamarind tree, he saw a boy of about sixteen years of age seated in profound meditation. When he came to normal consciousness, the boy-saint answered the questions of the elderly scholar, who forthwith became his disciple. Satakopa was a Vellâla by caste. The Vellala caste of the South has probably the same status as the Kayastha caste of Bengal. Satakopa's father was Kârimâran, the chieftain of Tirukkurukûr, which as we have already mentioned is now known as Alvar-tiru-nagari. His mother was Udaiya-Nankai. Satakopa, like prince Siddhartha of the Shakya clan was born on the full-moon day of the month of Vaishakha. The year of his birth is not yet ascertained. It probably lies in the latter part of the fifth century A.D. The works of Nammalvar were recorded by Madhurakavi and were popularized by Nâtha Muni (824-924 A.D.). Nâtha Muni was an erudite scholar in the Vedas, Smritis, and other scriptures and a Yogin. It was by chance that he heard the chanting of some beautiful psalms from *Tiruvaimozhi*. It appeared to him that to contemplate God with the aid of such

sweet psalms was preferable to the realization of God by the path of Yoga. Modern scholars, who look for the origin of Indian theism and of the path of love and devotion to alien sources such as Islam and Christianity would, if they listen to the songs of *Tiruvaimozhi*, the *Devara* hymns and the rhapsodies of *Tiruvâchakam*, come to the conclusion that Bhakti originated in Tamil-land.

The four great mystics of Southern Shaivism, Tiru-Nâvukkarasar (574—655 A.D.), a contemporary of the Prophet of Islam, Tiru-Gnâna-Sambhanda (680—655 A.D.), the child-saint of Shiyali, Sundara-Murti (807—825 A.D.), the friend and preceptor of Sêraman Perumâl, the Kerala king from whom the Kollam era of Malabar begins, and Manikka-Vâchaka, the prime minister who turned ascetic and who probably lived in the tenth century A.D., have left behind soul-stirring poems which led to a spiritual and national renaissance that rose to its greatest height in the founding of the Chola Empire of the eleventh and the twelfth centuries and the building of magnificent temples that reveal the aesthetic aspect of Tamilian culture. The history of Tamil-land has a blank space from the third to the sixth centuries A.D. The Pallavas ruled in Kanchi from the middle of the third century and the Imperial Guptas were ruling in Northern India but the Chera, the Chola and the Pandyan dynasties of Tamil-land were temporarily eclipsed. The resuscitation of the ancient dynasties may be said to begin in the middle of the seventh century, more precisely in 641 A.D. when the Pallava King Narasimhavarman defeated the Chalukya King Pulikesi II in the battle of Vatabhi. It is known that Chalukya

Pulikesi II successfully opposed King Harsha of Kanauj, an account of whom is given by the Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang. The general who commanded the Pallava forces against Pulikesi II was Siruthondar, who was later canonized as a saint of Southern Shaivism. This Siruthondar was a friend of the child-saint of Shiyali and drew his inspiration from him. The atheistic doctrines of Buddhism and Jainism, which in their decadent period were stifling the thought-currents of the country and leading men to pessimism and inaction, were cast aside by the light shed by the Shaiva and Vaishnava mystics and the people were put in possession of a new source of strength. The careers of Sambhanda and Sundara, although brief, were extremely brilliant. They befriended kings, infused new life into old institutions and gave a new impetus to the political life of Tamil-land which carried the country forward till the early part of the fourteenth century. The same may be said of the Vaishnava saints. The fact that faith in God and in the saving power of His grace can rouse a people to action is well illustrated by the history of Tamil-land subsequent to the advent of the Alvares and the Nayanmars (Shaiva saints). After the saints came the Acharyas, who systematized and codified their teachings and consciously or unconsciously limited the spirit of freedom brought down from heaven by the Great Ones. We shall point out one instance in which the heavenly gift of social freedom which the great mystics brought was curbed by the sacerdotalism of subsequent centuries.

The mystics, who continually lived in the consciousness that they were children of God, friends, servants and helpers of God, knew no barriers of

caste. How touching are some of the episodes connected with their divine lives! Gnana-Sambhanda, a Brahmin of the Kaundinya Gotra, who encouraged the performance of Vedic rituals, befriended the musician Tiru-Neelakanta and his wife, Viraliyar. They travelled with him and set to music the beautiful hymns which he sang *extempore* when he visited temples. The party reached the house of Tiru-Neelanakka, a saintly Brahmin. In Tamil-land, the professional musician caste is considered low. But Gnana-Sambhanda asked his host to accommodate the musician and his wife in the inner apartments of the house. The host, an orthodox Brahmin, emulating the good example set up by his saintly guest, accommodated the couple in the holiest apartment of the house, the room in which the sacred Vedic fire was kept. The Fire-god himself approved the action, for it is recorded that the flames joyously turned towards the right. Gnana-Sambhanda young in years, yet old in divine wisdom, addressed Tiru-Navukkarasar who was ripe in age and in wisdom always as 'Appar', the Tamil word for father. This endearing term has come down to us as one of the appellations of the elderly saint. St. Appar like Nammalvar belonged to the Vellala caste. He was eighty-one when he passed away and Sambhanda was barely sixteen. The first meeting of the septuagenarian and the seven years' old is one of the touching incidents in the annals of the hagiology of Southern Shaivism. Another Brahmin-saint Appûthiyadikal attained the highest by meditating upon the life of St. Appar. Madhura-kavi, a Brahmin by caste, informs posterity in ten beautiful soul-stirring stanzas that he knew of no God other than Mâran (the family name of Satakopa) who revealed the truth of the Vedas through the Tamil language.

Tirup-Pânâlvar belonged to the musician caste, but Sri Ranganatha, the Deity of Srirangam, ordered that he be brought to the Divine Presence on the shoulders of a Brahmin. Seraman Perumal, the saintly king of Kerala, whom we have already mentioned as the friend of Sundara-Murti bowed down before a washerman because his body was covered by ashes, the symbol of Shiva Mahadeva. This catholicity in social behaviour among the devotees persisted in the time of the early Acharyas. Arul-Nandi-Shivacharya, a reputed Brahmin scholar of the thirteenth century accepted as his Guru the great Meikandan of the Vellala caste. Umâpathi-Shivacharya the fourth in succession in the line of Meikandan belonged to the extremely orthodox priestly class of Chidambaram. He was ostracized by his people and lived in Kotravankudi, in the outskirts of the city of Chidambaram. By divine intervention, his people had to call him back. Umapathi-Shivacharya initiated the untouchable Petrân Sambân into the highest truth. The catholicity of Ramanuja is well known. From house-tops he declared the saving word to one and all and was prepared to go to the direst hell, if that act would bring the consolation of religion to the lowest of the low. He elevated the social status of untouchables and others. When Ramanuja's influence spread in the North, the mystics who drew their inspiration from him as well as others broke down the barriers of caste and democratized religion.

The influence of the Nayanmars was restricted to Tamil-land, although there were schools of Shaivism in the extreme North in Kashmir, Nepal and Tibet. Paramjyoti Munivar, the spiritual preceptor of Meikandan, the founder of the

later Shaiva Siddhanta school, is said to have gone to Tamil-land from the Sacred Mount Kailas, in Tibet. The Pâshupata, the Kâpâlika, the Mâhâvrata and other forms of Shaivism that drew their inspiration from the North were existing in Tamil-land at the time of the advent of the Nayanmars. Tirumôlar, probably the founder of the Natha school of mysticism flourished in Tamil-land in an earlier period. He also is said to have gone to the South from Kailas. The Agamas, twenty-eight in number, considered to be the authoritative texts of the Shaiva religion, give elaborate details concerning temple-building and rituals of worship. In the Agamas mention is made of Brahmin priests of Gauda-Desha, stating that they are the most competent to perform religious rituals. Some of the Chola kings in their grants to temples make special mention of employing priests from the afore-said country. All these go to show that Southern Shaivism looked northwards for inspiration and attempted to synthesize the original thought of the Nayanmars and Shaiva Acharyas with the Vedic and Tantrik thought from the North. In the case of Southern Vaishnavism the flow of thought was in the other direction. From the fountain-head of Satakopa and the other Alvars torrents of devotion surged northwards until they covered the whole country. Ramanuja was the Bhagirath who led the waters of the holy Cauvery of the South to mingle in the waters of the sacred Ganges of the North. The commingling took place not at one spot but at various points in the course of the sacred river and the life-giving waters spread over Western India as well. The thousand names of Hari reverberated in the atmosphere of this thrice holy land of Hindusthan.

It was indeed timely that the religion of Bhakti, Grace and Faith spread throughout the length and breadth of Medieval India. Coming events cast their shadows before and the country was to receive into its bosom an alien faith that originated in Arabia, a faith which was built upon the cardinal principles of absolute self-surrender to God and the brotherhood of all believers in the faith without distinction of caste, race or nationality. When these principles were taking shape in Arabia, the great mystics of Tamil-land were also building up a new society on the same foundations. How wonderful is the working of the Supreme Spirit that shapes the destinies of nations and individuals! Twelve centuries earlier when Gautama Buddha walked on the soil of this holy land summoning men to a life of discipline and moral perfection, Confucius and Lao-Tze in China and probably Pythagoras in Greece were preaching the same doctrines. The new outlook in national life provided by the lives and teachings of the Alvars, the Nayanmars and their successors democratized Hindu religion, established the brotherhood of the Brahmin and the Pariah and created a solidarity that helped Hindu society to withstand successfully the onslaught of the new religion that came with the conquerors of the country. This outlook also helped towards working out a synthesis of the Semitic religious thought of the conquerors and the indigenous religious thought of the people over whom they ruled. Devotion to God, the love of fellow beings and the emotional aspect of the Hindu religion which encouraged poetry and the fine arts provided the meeting ground for the two parties. The Moghul emperors, who were racially Mongols and whose ancestors were followers of Shamaism, the worship of the 'Everlasting Blue Sky' and of

Taoism and Buddhism were great worshippers of the beautiful. They were also greatly influenced by Iranian art and culture. History tells us that some of the emperors were sons of Hindu mothers, and actively worked for the harmonizing of the two great religious creeds followed by their subjects. We all know of the great Akbar, a Muslim brought up in a Hindu home, who attempted to create a new religion harmonizing the Hindu and the Semitic creeds. Leaders of thought and men who were guiding the political destinies of Medieval India knew that the God of all religions was the same and that it was best to allow the followers of each religion to observe the practices and rituals of their forefathers. Where dry-as-dust philosophy would have observed differences and consequently ended in strife, the religion of the heart, the religion of devotion saw sameness and laboured for the intensifying of the spirit of love in the hearts of one and all. Before we proceed further and see how the movement spread, it might be worth while to get to know something about the life of the great apostle of the South who influenced the thought-currents of Medieval India.

Ramanuja was born in Siriperumbudur. The date of his birth is fixed by orthodox tradition as 1017 A.D. Some would bring it down to 1087 A.D. We follow Sir S. Radhakrishnan and fix it at 1027 A.D. The date of his passing away is accepted on all hands to be 1187 A.D. He thus lived to the full span of human life. So did Natha Muni and the same is said of Yamunacharya and also of Rāmānanda and Kabir. The sages of Medieval India appear to have solved the problem of longevity by having faith in God and in relaxing their mind in the midst of

activity. Even to-day one can see centenarians among the Vaishnavas of Srirangam and the deeply religious Muslims in South India. Ramanuja studied Vedanta under Yadavaprakasha of Conjeevaram. For centuries Kanchi (Conjeevaram) was a seat of learning in the South. Yamunacharya also known as Ālavandār, successor and grandson of Natha Muni, hearing of the learning of Ramanuja sent for him with the view of installing him as his successor. Ramanuja arrived only after Yamuna's death and took upon himself to fulfill the three great tasks left to him by Yamuna. These were the perpetuation of the memory of Parāshara, author of the *Vishnu Purana*, the immortalization of the glory of Satakopa and the interpretation of the Brahma Sutras according to the philosophical tenets of the Vishishtadvaita system. He embraced Sannyasa, studied the works of Yamuna and the Prabandha, the collected works of the Alvars. It is said also that he went to Kashmir to copy the commentary of Bodhāyana on the Brahma Sutras. He appears to have completed the *Sri Bhāshya* commentary on the Brahma Sutras in 1100 A.D. and went about from place to place popularizing his teachings. He visited many important places in the North and had a victory over the Buddhists of Benares and Puri and built monasteries in those places. He perpetuated Parashara's name by getting a commentary on the *Vishnu Sahasranāma* written by Bhatta, a son of his disciple Kūresha and perpetuated Nammalvar's name by getting an authoritative commentary on the *Tiruvaimozhi* written by Kuruksha, another disciple. He brought all classes of people into the Vaishnava fold and gave them privileges which they never enjoyed before. Owing to the persecution of the Chola emperors, who were staunch followers of the

Shaiva faith, he had to flee to Mysore and there converted the Hoysala ruler Bitti Vishnuvardhana from Jainism to Vaishnavism. He stayed at Melkote for twelve years where he installed the image of Sri Krishna brought from Delhi. This image is said to have been in the possession of a Muslim princess who loved Sri Krishna. Accordingly the Muslim princess was considered as the consort of the Deity. Untouchable devotees were allowed to offer worship in this temple. Ramanuja organized the spiritual ministration of the Vaishnavas by dividing the country into parishes and appointing priests to preside over each parish. By his learning, spirituality and organizing capacity, he ensured the permanence of the Vaishnava faith.

* * *

'The influence of Ramanuja is visible throughout the later history of Hinduism. The movements of Madhva, Vallabha, Chaitanya, Ramananda, Kabir, and Nānak, and the reform organizations of Brahmoism are largely indebted to Ramanuja's theistic idealism' (Sir S. Radhakrishnan). Kallianpur in the Udipi Taluka of the district of South Kanara is stated to be the birthplace of Madhva (1197-1276 A.D.). He was also called Ānandatīrtha. He gave the Dvaita, dualistic interpretation of the Brahma Sutras. His pupil Naraharīrtha is said to have held a high position in Orissa. Nimbarka, a Telugu Brahmin, was a junior contemporary of Ramanuja. He also wrote a short commentary on the Brahma Sutras. His Vedantic theory is said to be monistic as well as pluralistic. Ramananda (1800-1411 A.D.) was born at Prayaga of Brahmin parentage. We are told that there is a popular verse to the effect that Bhakti arose first in Dravida land, Ramananda carried it to the North and Kabir spread it to the

seven continents and the nine divisions of the world. Ramananda was a disciple of Rāghavānanda, a teacher of the Vishishtadvaita school of Ramanuja. He effectively broke down the barriers of caste by making all devotees of Vishnu dine together and by using the vernaculars as the vehicle for the propagation of his creed.

Noble birth, riches, both these boons
it grants;
It casts aside the ills of votaries
And gives them heavenly perfection,
with
Eternal life and blissful grace divine;
Urged by love more than that fond
mothers bear,
Triumph it grants and many other
boons;
That which gives all these I declare, it is
The sacred name, the name of
Narayana.

Thus sang Tiru-Mangai-Mannan, the robber-chief who became a saint and was counted as one of the twelve Alvars. The commentator says that the devotee who takes the name of Narayana ceases to belong to his old caste and enters a new caste, the caste of devotees. This principle was fully put into practice by Ramananda, who accepted Muslims, women and untouchables as his disciples and elevated them to the status of teachers. Perceiving the unity of God, who is the origin of all, Ramananda looked upon humanity as one large family. Such a conception immediately removed all distinctions of caste and creed. 'He held that when a devotee surrendered his life to the divine will his former life was lost in God and a new life began for him.' Ravidās the cobbler, Kabir the Muslim weaver, Dhannā the Jat peasant, Sēnā the barber and Padmāvati a woman, were among his disciples.

Kabir (1498-1518 A.D.) is said to have become a disciple of Ramananda in a marvellous way. Thinking that the Brahmin sage may not care to accept as disciple a poor Muslim boy of the weaver caste, Kabir went early to the bathing-ghat in the Ganges frequented by the sage and there laid himself down on the stone pavement. Before the break of dawn Ramananda went to the bathing-ghat and unknowingly trampled on the body of his future disciple. As it was still dark, Ramananda did not know what exactly took place. In his embarrassment he twice repeated the name of Rama, his favourite Deity. Kabir shouted 'Rama, Rama' and ran away, before the sage could demand an explanation. It is said that Kabir was only thirteen years of age when he met Ramananda in this strange fashion. He went about telling people that he had been accepted as a disciple of Ramananda. When the sage sent for Kabir and asked for an explanation, Kabir told him that contact with the sage's feet and the receiving of the holy name of Rama from his lips were in themselves sufficient to constitute discipleship. Ramananda clasped Kabir to his breast and thereafter Kabir regularly attended the Master's classes. The divinely inspired Kabir went about preaching the harmony of Islam and Hinduism. Many of his songs and utterances have become the common heritage of all souls having a real thirst for God. 'The God of the Hindus is in Benares, the God of the Muhammadans is in Mecca but the God of all is in the hearts of all creatures,' said Kabir. This remarkable saying forms the key-note of Kabir's teachings.

Ravidas, the cobbler disciple of Ramananda, reminds us of Jacob

Boehme (1575-1624 A.D.), the great German mystic, the shoe-maker who inspired the English mystic William Blake. Mirabai, the saintly queen whose beautiful hymns have come down to us is said to be a disciple of Ravidas. According to Ravidas the highest expression of religion in life is the service of human beings and God can be realized only by the devotee who knows the pain of divine love. Dadu (1544-1603 A.D.) was born in Rajputana and was a follower of Kabir's ideals. He admitted both Hindus and Muhammadans to his discipleship. Tulasidas the author of the Ramayana in Hindi verse lived in the sixteenth century. He was inspired by the spiritual life of Ramananda. Sri Ramachandra, the incarnation of truth, justice, love, obedience and duty was his ideal and hero. Tulasi was a contemporary of the Emperor Akbar and found favour at the royal court. Surdas, the mystic poet also lived about this time. His devotional songs were addressed to Sri Krishna. Love for the Divine Cowherd of Brindaban was the ideal that inspired Vallabhacharya to found a new sect. He was a Telugu Brahmin. His date of birth is said to be 1479 A.D. About this time there appeared in Bengal a great spiritual personage, who stirred the depths of emotion and led men to the love of God and their fellow beings. Sri Chaitanya (1485-1533 A.D.) brought about a revolution in the religious life of Bengal. It was at Gaya that he was initiated into the Bhakti cult by a Vaishnava savant Ishvara Muni. He travelled widely and in the South he came into contact with the followers of Ramanuja. In Bengal he organized Sankirtanas, singing the names of God in chorus. Many a thirsting soul was filled by the life-giving waters of devotion. Sri Chaitanya identified himself

with Sri Radha, the beloved of the Divine Cowherd of Brindaban.

Let us turn westwards and gain some glimpses into the lives of the saints who adorned the Maharashtra province of Medieval India. Nivrattinatha, son of Viththalapant, a monk who gave up the robes, lived in the latter part of the thirteenth century and was a disciple of Gahininatha. Accordingly, the spiritual impetus of Maharashtra has its origin in the Natha cult. Nivrattinatha was the Guru of his brother Jnanadeva, who attained great eminence as a mystic philosopher. Namadeva who was born of a tailor family was a contemporary of Jnanadeva. The devotion of the Maharashtra school of mystics centred round Pandharpur, where the Deity is known by the name of Viththala and Panduranga. 'The Vaishnavism of the Maratha country found a fertile soil among the lower classes, though it has had followers among Brahmanas and other higher classes also. Like the Vaishnavism of the disciples of Ramananda, it had no learned or Sanskrit-knowing promulgators, but its prophets were Shudras, who, however, had the true religious instinct and possessed a clear spiritual insight. Such were Namdev and Tukaram' (Sir R. G. Bhandarkar). Tukaram (1607-1649 A.D.), the mystic poet, many of whose Abhangs have come down to us, was a contemporary of Shivaji, king of the Maharattas. He refused offers from King Shivaji and advised him to become a disciple of Ramadasa. This saint who inspired Shivaji was partly affected by the political upheaval of his time. As a practical mystic Ramadasa established monasteries in the country to serve as centres of spiritual and practical activities. His heart was given entirely to

God. 'Unite all who are Marathas (men who shrink not from death) together and propagate the Dharma of the Maharashtras' was the advice of Ramadasa.

The *Granth Sâhib*, the authoritative scripture of Sikhism is said to have been first compiled in the year 1604 A.D. Among other things it contains the holy utterances and hymns of some of the mystics, we mentioned above. It was compiled by Guru Arjun Dev, the fifth Sikh Guru. Guru Nânak, the first Guru and originator of Sikhism, was born in 1469 A.D. at Talwandi near Lahore. He travelled widely to the west as far as Mecca and Baghdad and to the south as far as Ceylon. He was loved and admired by Hindus and Muslims alike. He believed in the dignity of labour and in the useful life of a devout householder. The early history of Sikhism forms a glorious chapter in the religious history of Medieval India. The Gurus were mystics and at the same time intensely practical men. They demolished the caste system, established practical equality among their disciples by such means as common kitchens, service of humanity and the protection of the weak and the oppressed. The Gurus introduced military training and laid the foundation of an organization for social amelioration. By the advent of the Gurus, a new national spirit was introduced into the country. In connection with Hindu-Muslim unity, which the mystics practically achieved in Medieval India, we should also make mention of Dara Shikoh, the emperor's son who became a mystic philosopher, of Pranatanth who had Hindu and Muslim followers and of Nagore Meeran of the South, who is claimed by both Hindus and Muslims. All these great

spiritual personages lived in the early part of the eighteenth century.

The religious revival of Medieval India, which we briefly surveyed, was intensely dynamic. New races of people and new faiths were assimilated without any break in the national continuity. People who were outside the traditional castes were brought into the Hindu fold, which thereby became strengthened. The energizing of the national consciousness by Bhakti destroyed the individualism of the preceding age, revived social faith and self-confidence and expressed the national life in the language of emotion. From the Himalayas to the Cape Comorin, the whole country pulsed with new life. The Aryan culture of the North was synthesized with the Dravidian culture of the South. The unity of Indian culture was thus established. The rise of the Maharatta power and the military organization of the Sikhs clearly testified to the fact that the theistic revival led by Ramanuja gave birth to the martial spirit of the Maharattas and the Sikhs even as the Advaita doctrine of Shankara gave birth to Rajput chivalry. Every great movement after achieving splendid results loses its momentum and stands

in need of a fresh impetus and a new integration. The path of devotion by constantly dwelling on the weakening ideas of man's littleness makes society lose the strength of individual initiative. The new scientific knowledge which the country received from the West has already given a shock to Christianity in Europe and America. Like Vaishnavism Christianity is essentially a path of devotion centering round the personality of the great founder. To withstand the shock of science, it is evident that Hinduism should now lay emphasis on the knowledge aspect. At the same time the spiritual treasures garnered by the mystics of Medieval India should not be lost to the nation. The needed synthesis between the old and the new, the Dvaita and the Advaita, science and mysticism, Eastern religions and Western thought, contemplation and social service has been brought about by the advent of Sri Ramakrishna. His chief disciple, Swami Vivekananda has in his writings and speeches clearly chalked out the path which the nation has to follow in order to achieve its own emancipation and become a torch-bearer to the nations of the world.

MAYAVATI,

11th September 1941.

'Religion for a long time has come to be statical in India; what we want is to make it dynamical, I want it to be brought into the life of everybody. Religion, as it always has been in the past, must enter the palaces of kings as well as the homes of the poorest peasants in the land. Religion, the common inheritance, the universal birthright of the race, must be brought free to the door of everybody.'

—Swami Vivekananda

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S MESSAGE TO THE WEST

BY JOSEPH CAMPBELL

'Mahâbhâva is God-consciousness,' Sri Ramakrishna once said, 'My joy after the experience of Mahabhava was equal to the pain I suffered before it. Mahabhava shakes the body and the mind to their foundation. It is like a huge elephant's entrance into a little hut. The hut is shaken to its foundation. Perhaps it falls apart.'

'The fire of the pain of this experience is not an ordinary feeling. It is said that the fire of this anguish, in Rupa and Sanâtana, scorched the leaves of the tree under which they sat. I was three days unconscious in that state of God-consciousness. I could not move. I lay in one place.'

'When I regained consciousness, I was taken out for a bath. But my skin could not bear the touch of a hand; so my body had to be covered with a heavy sheet. Only then could I be led to the bathing place. — The earth that had stuck to my body while I was lying on the ground had become baked.'

'When I was being overpowered by that state, I felt as if a ploughshare were passing through my backbone. I cried out, "Oh, I am dying! I am dying!" But afterwards I was filled with a great joy.'

This experience of Mahabhava represented the culmination of Sri Ramakrishna's long agony of yearning for union with the Absolute. During the earlier years of his devotion he had experienced many visions. He occasionally described them to his devotees :

'When I meditated,' said he, 'I would see vividly a person sitting near me with a trident in his hand. He would threaten to strike me with the weapon unless I

fixed my mind on the Lotus Feet of God. He would warn me that his trident would pierce my breast if my attention strayed from God.'

'Once I was meditating under the bael tree when "Sin" appeared before me and tempted me in various ways. He came to me in the form of an English soldier. He wanted to give me wealth, honour, sex-pleasure, various occult powers, and such things. I began to pray to the Divine Mother. (And now I am telling you something very secret.) The Mother appeared. I said to Her, "Kill him, Mother!" I remember still that form of the Mother, Her world-bewitching beauty. She came in the form of a young girl; but it seemed as if the world were moved by her glance.'

Keshab Chandra Sen once asked Sri Ramakrishna to describe to him the various ways in which the Divine Mother sports in the world. Sri Ramakrishna replied with the following glorious picture of Kâli :

'Oh,' Sri Ramakrishna said, 'She plays in many ways. She is known, according to Her various moods, as Mahâ-Kâli, Nitya-Kâli, Smashâna-Kâli, Raksha-Kâli, and Shyâmâ-Kâli. Mahâ-Kâli and Nitya-Kâli are mentioned in the Tantra philosophy. Before creation, when the sun, moon, and planets were not, and darkness was enveloped in darkness, then the Mother, the Formless One, Mahâ-Kâli, the Great Power, was one with Mahâ-Kâla, the Absolute.'

'As Shyâmâ-Kâli She has a tender aspect. Under this aspect She is worshipped in the Hindu households. She is represented as dispensing boons with

one hand and dispelling the fear of Her devotees with another.

'As Raksha-Kâli, the Protectress, She is worshipped at the time of plague, famine, earthquake, drought, and flood.

'But as Smashâna-Kâli She is the embodiment of the power of destruction. She resides in the cremation ground, surrounded by corpses, jackals, and terrible spirits—Her companions. From Her mouth issues a river of blood, on Her neck hangs a garland of human skulls, and the girdle around Her waist is made of human hands.

'After the destruction of the universe, at the end of each great cycle, the Divine Mother gathers together the seeds of the next creation. She behaves like the mistress of the house, who has a hotch-potch pot, in which she keeps an assortment of little household articles. . . . After the destruction of the universe, my Divine Mother, the Power of Brahman, gathers together the seeds. And then, after the re-creation, She pervades the universe. She brings this phenomenal world out of Her womb, and then pervades it. . . .

'Is Kâli, the Divine Mother, of a black complexion? When viewed from a distance, She appears black; but when intimately known, She is not so. . . .

'Bondage and liberation are both of Her making. By Her Mâyâ, worldly people become entangled in "Woman and Gold," and again they attain their liberation through Her grace. . . .

'The Divine Mother is always at play and is full of sportiveness. The universe is Her play. She is self-willed and must always have Her own way. She is full of bliss. She gives freedom to one out of millions.'

From the standpoint of the modern, enlightened Christian, Sri Ramakrishna was an idolater and worshipper of hideous images. During his century, the

Western world was devoting untold energy, love, and money, to the sending out of apostles into the darkness of Africa and Asia, to preach the good tidings of the Redemption of the children of Eve, and to transport, along with these tidings, the great philosophies and conveniences of civilization. This was the White Man's Burden : to enlighten and redeem the world.

Sri Ramakrishna was born in 1836, and in 1886 he died. In 1836, the year of his birth, a young English biologist, Charles Darwin, aboard the schooner 'Beagle,' was cruising the coasts of South America and the Isles of the Pacific, collecting data for his epoch-making books. And in 1886, the year of Sri Ramakrishna's death, a young English poet, Rudyard Kipling, born, like Sri Ramakrishna, in India, was publishing his first volume of patriotic verse. In 1859, the year of Sri Ramakrishna's marriage, Charles Darwin published *The Origin of Species*. In this work the mystery of evolution is mechanistically explained. The book became immediately the Rig-Veda of nineteenth century materialism. This very year, John Stuart Mill, the utilitarian, published his important essay, *On Liberty*. And precisely at this time, Darwin's, Mill's, and Kipling's queen, Victoria, took into her own hands the supervision of the people of India. The bayonet of Tommy Atkins had established, east of Suez, where there ain't no ten commandments and a man can raise a thirst, the empire of sweetness and light ; the empire of Darwinism, Utilitarianism, Victorianism, Birmingham tinware, Kipling's verse, and sterilized Christianity.

Meanwhile, Sri Ramakrishna is teaching at Dakshineswar, and he is speaking to his devotees, as follows :

'To know many things is ignorance—Ajnâna ; to know only one thing is knowledge—Jnâna : knowledge that

God alone is real and that it is He who dwells in all. And to talk with God is still fuller knowledge—Vijnâna. Vijnâna is the loving of God in various ways, after His realization.

'God is beyond one and two. God is beyond speech and mind. To ascend from God's play-in-the-world to His eternity, and to descend again from the Eternal to the Play, is called mature devotion.

'Suppose a man has a thorn in the sole of his foot. He procures another thorn and takes it out. That is to say, he removes the thorn of ignorance with the thorn of knowledge. But when he attains to fuller knowledge—Vijnana—then he discards the two thorns, ignorance and knowledge. Then he talks with God intimately, day and night.

'He who has merely heard of milk is ignorant. He who has seen milk has knowledge. But he who has drunk milk and been strengthened by it has attained Vijnana.

'There is a difference between a sage endowed with knowledge and one endowed with this fuller knowledge. The knowing type of sage has a certain way of sitting. He twirls his moustache and asks the visitor, "Well, sir! Have you any question to ask?" But the man who always sees God and talks to Him intimately has an altogether different nature. He is sometimes like an inert object, sometimes like a ghoul, sometimes like a child, and sometimes like a madman.

'When he is in Samâdhi, he becomes unconscious of the outer world and remains like an inert object. He sees everything as full of Brahman-consciousness: therefore he behaves like a ghoul. He is not conscious of any distinction between the holy and the unholy. He is not aware of filth and dirt. To him everything is Brahman.

'Again, he is like a madman. People notice his ways and actions and think of him as insane. Or again, he is sometimes like a child—without restraint, shame, hatred, or hesitation.

'One acquires this state of mind after the vision of God. When a boat passes a magnetic hill, its screws and nails are loosened and drop out. Lust, anger, and the other passions cannot exist after the vision of God.'

Throughout the entire course of the nineteenth century there is to be noted in Europe a revolt against the degradation of man in mechanization, utilization, sentimental hypocrisy, and militarization. In England itself, where the problems of the industrial revolution first presented themselves, we hear the cry of William Blake; perhaps the first to state the cause of man against the cause of standardized mediocrity. Consider, for instance, his poem, *London* :

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames
does flow,
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infants cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

How the Chimney-sweeper's cry
Every black'ning Church appalls;
And the hapless Soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down Palace walls.

But the most thro' midnight streets
I hear
How the youthful Harlot's curse
Blasts the new-born Infants tear,
And blights with plagues the
Marriage Hearse.

In France, the revolt against the banal complacencies and pious clichés of the

age of progress plunged a generation of tortured souls into every conceivable form of reaction. Consider Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Verlaine, for instance. Since the so-called 'Good Man' of the day was such a disheartening fiasco, perhaps divinity was to be discovered in the realms of the so-called 'Evil.'

And from Germany rings out the voice of Nietzsche :

'Verily, a polluted stream is man. One must be a sea, to receive a polluted stream without becoming impure.

'Lo, I teach you the Superman : he is that sea ; in him can your great contempt be submerged.

'What is the greatest thing ye can experience? It is the hour of great contempt. The hour in which even your happiness becometh loathsome unto you, and so also your reason and virtue.

'The hour when ye say : "What good is my happiness ! It is poverty and pollution and wretched self-complacency. But my happiness should be the justification of existence itself !"

'The hour when ye say : "What good is my reason ! Doth it long for knowledge as the lion for his food? It is mere poverty and pollution and wretched self-complacency !"

'The hour when ye say : "What good is my virtue ! As yet it hath not made me passionate. How weary I am of my good and my bad ! It is all poverty and pollution and wretched self-complacency !"

'The hour when ye say : "What good is my justice ! I do not see that I am fervour and fuel. Yet the just are fervour and fuel !"

'The hour when ye say : "What good is my pity ! Is not pity the cross on which he is nailed who loveth man? But my pity is not a crucifixion."

'Have ye ever spoken thus? Have ye ever cried out thus? Ah ! would that I had heard you crying out thus !

'It is not your sin—it is your self-satisfaction that crieth unto heaven !

'Where is the lightning to lick you with its tongue? Where is the frenzy with which ye should be inoculated?

'Lo, I teach you the Superman : he is that lightning, he is that frenzy !'

Nietzsche was shaken to his foundation, like a hut being entered by an elephant. He was shaken to his foundation, and he fell apart. He never survived to know the joy after the experience which would have been equal to the pain he suffered before it. So his words never rise to the glorious gentleness of the words of Sri Ramakrishna, who, even while Nietzsche was vigorously prophesying the Superman, quietly was teaching his devotees in Dakshineswar, and was speaking to them, as follows :

'Do I look down on worldly people? Of course not. When I see them, I apply the knowledge of Brahman, the Oneness of Existence. Brahman Itself has become all.—All are Nârâyana Himself.—Regarding all women as Mother. I see no difference between a chaste woman and a harlot.'

'One should attain to Brahman by negating the universe and all living beings; but after the attainment of Brahman, one discovers that it is Brahman Itself which has become all these—the universe and the living beings.'

'Consider the parable of the vilwa fruit. If a man separates the flesh from the shell and the seeds and then wishes to know the weight of the fruit, can he ascertain its weight by weighing only the flesh? He must weigh, together with the flesh, the shell and the seeds. At first the essential thing appears to be the flesh of the fruit, and not the seeds or shell. But then, by reasoning, one discovers that the shell, the seeds, and the flesh all together constitute the fruit. Shell and seeds belong to the thing to

which the flesh belongs.—Similarly, in spiritual discrimination, you must first reason according to the method of 'Not this, not this':—God is not the universe; God is not the living beings. Brahman alone is real and everything else is unreal. But finally you will realize, as you realized in the case of the vilwa fruit, that the Reality from which we derive the notion of Brahman is the very Reality which creates the idea of universe and living beings. That is to say, the Eternal and the Play-of-the-world are two aspects of the one Reality.'

The Europeans who protested against the empire of mediocrity, themselves failed to attain to the springs of power. So their world of ideals went down before the steamroller. But in Dakshineswar, only a few miles outside the Victorian metropolis of Calcutta, practising his Sâdhanâ, not according to enlightened, modern methods, but after the most ancient, most superstitious, most idolatrous traditions of timeless India : now hanging to a tree, like a monkey; now posturing and dressing as a girl; now weeping before an image; now sitting, night and day, like a stump; six years unable to close his eyes, himself terrified at what was happening to him; swooning in the ocean of the Mother's love; stunned by the experience of Brahman—Sri Ramakrishna cut the hinges of the heavens and released the fountains of divine bliss.

This bliss, this joy of Absolute Man, is the power that now goes out against the empires of the historical ego. It will never down them—for the play of ignorance is eternal; but neither will it ever go down beneath them.

'Dogmatism is not good,' declared the Master, to his devotees at Dakshineswar.

'Do you know where lies the mistake of those who speak of the formless God? It lies where they say that God is formless only, and that those who differ with them are wrong.—But I know that God is both with form and without. And God may have still further aspects. It is possible for Him to be everything.

'I have practised all religions—Hinduism, Islam, Christianity. I have followed the paths of the different Hindu sects. . . . I have found that it is the one God towards whom all are directing their steps, though along different paths. . . . Wherever I look, I see men quarrelling in the name of religion—the Hindus, Mohammedans, Brâhmos, Vaishnavas, and the rest; but they never reflect that He who is called Krishna is also called Shiva, and bears the names of Shakti, Jesus, and Allah as well : the one Râma with a thousand names.

'The tank has several ghats. At one, Hindus draw water in pitchers and call it "Jala"; at another, Mussalmans draw water in leathern bottles and call it "Pâni"; at a third, Christians do the same and call it "Water." Can we imagine that the water is not "Jala," but "Pani" or "Water?" How ridiculous! The substance is one under different names, and everyone is seeking the same substance; nothing but climate, temperament, and names vary. Let each man follow his own path. If he sincerely and ardently wishes to know God, peace be unto him! He will realize Him surely.'

SHANKARA AND BRADLEY

BY PROF. GOVINDA CHANDRA DEB, M.A.

Superficial resemblance between Shankara and Bradley seems to have been exaggerated to a fault. Perhaps similarity of expressions in spite of their widely divergent connotations has led to such misunderstood estimations. On closer reflection it cannot be gainsaid that the positions of Shankara and Bradley are diametrically opposed. Bradley seems to steer a middle course between Shankara and Hegel. For Shankara this world is an appearance ultimately unreal, not truly existent even when it is felt as is corroborated by the new conception of negation

viz. व्याधिकरणवर्मावच्छिन्नप्रतियोगिताकोऽभावः

introduced by Vedanta; to Hegel the world of experience is related to the Absolute in a clear manner intellectually conceivable; but to Bradley the world of experience is somehow related to the Absolute, we know not how. The Absolute of both Hegel and Bradley is concrete, but yet Bradley's Absolute is not so concrete as Hegel's. Bradley seems to waver between the categorical negation of the metaphysical status of the world of experience in Shankara and the plain affirmation of the existential status of the world of experience in Hegel in his transition from phenomenology to the philosophy of the Absolute Spirit. Bradley exhibits clearly the incompatibility of appearance with reality and thus gives his reader to understand at the start that he is approaching the position of Shankara but in the last resort he feels more or less the force of the Hegelian affirmation of the existence of appearance and tries to return to Hegel. This is why if

we confine our attention to Bradley's book of Appearance, we are rather tempted to give out that it is a pronouncement of the Shankarite conception of reality, in its *negative aspect*. But as soon as we pass on to the book of Reality, nay in its first page we are given a different impression. The appearances are advanced as partial realities. It is easy because of this to find by detached vision and a selected study a parallel of both Shankara and Hegel in Bradley. Bradley's own position, whatever be its ultimate worth, is original, and can neither be characterized as a parallel of Shankara nor as that of Hegel. Bradley himself takes much pains to differentiate his own metaphysical thesis from that of Hegel in the chapter on 'Thought and Reality,' and in this chapter he also distinguishes his own position from that of Kant. If Kantian separation of noumenon from phenomenon be a parallel of the Vedantic distinction between Brahman and Jagat at least to some extent (as it should be), from Bradley's own statement his differences from Shankara are quite obvious.

Bradley characterizes this world of experience as an appearance, owing to its being riddled with contradictions. This he exhibits by an elaborate analysis of the categories of knowledge. Here he follows in the footsteps of Kant in his Transcendental Dialectic; the only difference is that Bradley is less systematic and more comprehensive than Kant. He is less systematic because he follows no fixed principle in formulating the list of categories to be considered. He is in a sense more

comprehensive because he considers certain ways of looking at things not considered by Kant, e.g. to Bradley thing-in-itself also is a mode of apprehending things and as such an appearance but to Kant it is assuredly not of such a character. To Shankara also this world is an appearance on the same ground. The subject and the object, says Shankara, are of a contradictory character and yet this world is nothing but a mixture of the subject and the object. That is a standing contradiction and therefore false. This thesis of Shankara has been restated by Kant in his antinomies and Bradley in his discourse on appearance, of course with due modifications. But the similarity between Shankara and Bradley on this point cannot be pressed too far, inasmuch as Bradley's *appearance* and Shankara's *मिथ्यात्व* have widely different connotations. To Bradley, appearances are appearances of reality and as such partially real; whereas to Shankara, appearances cannot have any true relation with reality. So, rightly understood the premise of Shankara and Bradley is the same. If, on this account, similarity of Shankara with Bradley can be emphasized, on the same ground, the similarity of Shankara with Hegel can also be emphasized, which is obviously absurd. Hegel also feels that there are contradictory features of the world of experience and he offers a solution of this problem by demonstrating the possibility of reconciliation of opposites. So the recognition of the incoherent character of facts of experience is the common point between Shankara, Bradley and Hegel and even Kant. But this is no argument to prove that there is a fundamental unity between metaphysical conceptions of either Shankara and Bradley, or between those of Bradley and Hegel.

The next point of similarity between

Shankara and Bradley is taken to be their criterion of reality. It is urged that with both non-contradictoriness is the essence of reality. Shankara's Brahman is undoubtedly non-contradictory in view of the fact that it is not in contact with the object. Contradiction is the result of the superimposition of the object upon the subject and *vice versa*. So, as long as the subject shines by itself, there is no chance of its being infected with contradictions. But this similarity seems to be surface-deep, in view of the fact that in Shankara non-contradictoriness means absolute negation of contradiction resulting in mere self-affirmation, whereas in Bradley it is a negation of contradictions as such which results in an affirmation of them in a new shape. For Bradley non-contradictoriness by itself (i.e. in the absence of harmony) amounts to the affirmation of pure being which is as good as nothing. Here Bradley betrays himself a disciple of Hegel. Bradley discusses at length the nature of non-contradiction and points out that non-contradictoriness, if it implies a mere absence of contradictions, would be an absolute negation which is after all an impossibility. Negation must ultimately lead to an affirmation and as such Bradley concludes that non-contradictoriness is hardly distinct from the positive principle of harmony. Shankara would also agree with Bradley in maintaining that negation must ultimately lead to an affirmation. But it cannot be the affirmation of the datum negated, because that is hardly consistent. Negation ultimately leads to the affirmation of the bare substratum. Shankara would thus point out that his principle of non-contradictoriness is also positive inasmuch as it amounts to an affirmation of existence of the bare substratum (अविद्यानावशेषो हि नास्ति कल्पितवस्तुनः). The difficulty of Bradley is that he is not pre-

pared to admit that the bare substratum by itself is at all positive. Hence he says that reality is richer for all discords. From the standpoint of Shankara the incompatibility of the world-appearance with the nature of Brahman may be pointed out, and Bradley also would recognize this incompatibility. But Bradley would say that in spite of this he cannot deny the felt existence of appearance. But from the standpoint of Shankara it would be argued that this felt existence is quite compatible with the denial of ultimate existence. Thus the point at issue is : according to Shankara what is felt to be real is ultimately unreal but according to Bradley what is felt as real must somehow be ultimately real. These conclusions are mere deductions from their respective theories of error. According to Shankara the snake-rope is wholly an illusion, whereas according to Bradley it is an appearance of a lower order, merging itself in a normal appearance and ultimately in the Absolute. Bradley finds an intellectual absurdity in the division of reality into two hemispheres—noumenon and phenomenon. If phenomenon be treated as the appearance and noumenon as reality and if they are placed side by side, the question of relating the two would inevitably arise and relation is a bundle of contradictions. So Bradley feels the necessity of placing phenomenon in the *breast* of noumenon. His *other* difficulty is that in the absence of a possible substratum of appearances they would be floating ideas, incapable of being referred to a substratum in which they can ultimately rest. If appearances are treated as utterly illusory it has to be maintained, Bradley urges, that the appearances are devoid of a substratum which is a sheer absurdity. With due modification the selfsame objection has been urged against Shankara by Ramana when the latter says that neither

can Brahman be the stratum of Maya, nor can the Jiva. The answer from the standpoint of Shankara would be that illusory content has for its stratum—reality, but that does not mean ultimate existence of the illusory content in reality. Here, an entity is the stratum of a non-entity. Thus, the vital issue is whether a bare substratum by itself can be postulated as real? Here the answer of Shankara is in the affirmative whereas Bradley's is in the negative. From the standpoint of Shankara, it will be indicated that the incompatibility of the world-appearance with the Absolute recognized by Bradley hardly leaves any scope for its reinstatement in reality. Bradley would, however, argue that there must be a substratum of appearances, and the division of reality into two utterly dissociated spheres being untenable, appearances must somehow fall within reality. To obviate the apparent absurdity of the situation he supplements in this particular reference logical necessity by problematic possibility—a 'must be' by a 'may be' and by an addition of the two passes on to a categorical assertion. Logically considered, this is a make-shift : a 'must be' never leans on a 'may be' in order to pass to the 'is.' Rightly understood, from Bradley's standpoint appearances must more be outside reality than in it. This is why he places appearances in the Absolute not as bare appearances, but as transmuted ones. Critics may easily argue that appearances transmuted are not appearances.

The incompatibility of the appearances of Bradley with his Absolute becomes singularly prominent in his doctrine of degrees of truth and reality. Bradley is not satisfied by merely pointing out that appearances somehow fall in reality. But he also observes that appearances constitute a graduated

scale of varying degrees of existence. He says that reality has no degrees and yet appearances have varying degrees of reality. Non-contradictoriness and harmony constitute the standard of reality and consequently the more self-consistent and inclusive an appearance is, the more real it is. To illustrate this grade of appearances, he compares error with appearances and concludes that error is a 'false appearance' in comparison with which normal appearance is real. Bradley's thesis is that appearances are adjusted to reality by the removal of their contradictory character and he makes this thesis a point in favour of the doctrine of degrees of truth and reality. The more real an appearance is, the less effort is necessary on the part of reality to adjust it with its self-consistent harmony, and the less real an appearance is, the more is the amount of effort necessary for its adjustment with reality. Now this doctrine of Bradley which is perhaps most eloquent in the assertion of reality of appearances is hardly consistent with Bradley's fundamental thesis of reality being a harmonious whole. When reality is a supra-relational whole harmonious in character, utterly devoid of contradictions, appearances cannot be said to exist in it with their varying degrees of self-consistency. There they constitute a unitary self-consistent whole, and Bradley observes that in reality there can be no degrees of existence. As such from the standpoint of reality there can be no question of any degrees of being. The suggestion of the so-called degrees of effort on the part of reality for an adjustment of appearances with its own harmonious character seems to be an ingenious device, because there are no contradictions from the standpoint of the whole but it is only the detached vision of thought that dissects the unity of reality into two opposing poles of

a 'what' and a 'that,' that gives rise to contradictions. Thus, the degrees of truth and reality are mere thought-constructs which vanish into airy nothing when judged by the standard of reality. Bradley borrows the doctrine from Hegel whose scheme of dialectic exhibits the various grades of existences through an ever-ascending scale of categories. But Bradley forgets one fact. These grades of existences are but grades of thought and if Bradley discards thought as the organ of reality he cannot at the same time uphold the doctrine of degrees of reality. For Hegel thought is the organ of reality and it is also reality and consequently Hegel can consistently with his position advance the doctrine of degrees of truth and reality. But Bradley's position being, on this point, the exact reverse of Hegel's, Bradley ought to have discarded this notion of degrees of truth and reality altogether. This shows how eager Bradley is to revert to the position of Hegel, of course, with a new emphasis and through a distinct path. It may be recorded that Bradley does not discard thought altogether inasmuch as he declares that thought's persistent frustrations and failures are but the stepping stones to reality. But this would not really improve matters. It would simply mystify the position. Here again we have to repeat with due modification what has already been said as to his positing transmuted appearances in the Absolute. It passes our comprehension how, if thought fails to reach reality, its scale of *existents* can have *some* meaning even in the light of reality. It is a real mystery and Bradley throughout harps upon it.

It is generally believed that both Shankara and Bradley agree in holding that thought is not the organ of reality. But this is also a half-ruth. Though both Shankara and Bradley assert that

thought cannot reach reality, yet in the last resort Shankara maintains an intellectualistic attitude whereas Bradley shows himself as an anti-intellectualist. Shankara remains faithful to the law of contradiction even to the last, but Bradley is ready to part company with it when the question of placing appearances in reality crops in. To say that thought cannot reach reality is one thing and to say that the demand of thought must be modified for the sake of something else is another. Shankara is conscious of the limitations of intellect in so far as immediate apprehension of reality is concerned. But he does not go to the length of asserting that supra-logical intuition does not fulfil the conditions of the intellectual standard. Intuition rather is the fulfilment of intellectual demand, pure and simple. The case of Bradley is the reverse of this. He modifies the intellectual demand in order to account for the existence of the world of experience in the Absolute. Of course, he has the right to exhibit that the same demand is inspired by a purely logical spirit. But Bradley has not ultimately been successful in safeguarding this thesis. If contradictions were reconcilable in thought, the demonstration of the contradictory character of the world of experience ought not to have amounted to a characterization of them as appearances. So, at the very outset, Bradley gives us to understand that the intellect demands incompatibility of contradictories. But later on as he advances, he places, as it were, a second criterion of truth, viz. the possibility of harmonizing appearances. From this it seems that Bradley is an *anti-intellectualist Hegelian*, if one can at all be one in spite of one's hostility to intellectualism. The thesis of Hegel is that contradictories are compatible in character and this com-

patibility can be intellectually understood too. Whereas the thesis of Bradley is that the contradictories are at first sight incompatible, though ultimately compatible; but this compatibility can never be adequately understood by intellect. Nevertheless, this compatibility is forced upon us by an intellectual necessity. It fairly takes one's breath away to understand how an intellectual demand is incapable of being intellectually comprehended. If intellect is at all able to solve a riddle, the latter must cease to be a riddle. The explanation of intellect, as well as its demand, must be comprehensible. The very fact that Bradley asserts, on the one hand, that the reconciliation of the contradictories is based on a general standard and yet observes that this is something of an intellectual mystery on the other, goes to prove that the demand is more mystical than intellectual in character. Bradley seems to be on very strong grounds when he raises a protest against the illogical character of Hegelian dialectic and its reconciliation of contradictories. But he seems to be returning to Hegel when he takes it for granted that owing to the same intellectual demand he is advancing the doctrine of reconciliation of opposites. Owing to his original starting point which is diametrically opposed to Hegel's, he cannot fully share Hegel's views and introduces the doctrine of intellectual incomprehensibility of such a reconciliation, though it is the very height of intellectual speculation. Either Bradley has to say that the reconciliation of contradictories is logically comprehensible, or he has to say that this is mystical in character. Bradley's effort has been to leave scope for both the logical and the mystical demands side by side which are, however, repellent in character. This vacillation leads Bradley, as we have already seen, to observe that this *must*

be according to a general principle, and this *may be* perhaps factually, and therefore it is as a matter of fact. The very fact that Bradley supplements the logical '*must be*' by a '*may be*' indicates that '*must be*' by itself is not strong enough to assert its claim. This is not because of any inherent defect in the *must be*, if it were really a *must be*, but its uncertain character, in spite of its apparent necessity, is due to the fact that it is in conflict with the original thesis of Bradley i.e. his original departure from Hegel. So if Bradley is at all an intellectualist, he is so in spite of his anti-intellectualism. And this is obviously absurd. What Bradley could have very legitimately asserted is that reality is devoid of all contradictions, yet this world of experience, contradictory in character, somehow exists as a standing challenge to the intellectual demand. But he has gone farther, and elevated this 'somehow' of experience into a dialectical necessity by claiming that the world of experience is somehow consistent with the non-contradictoriness of reality. And here he definitely bids farewell to his intellectualism. The reverse is the case with Shankara. He finds that reality must be non-contradictory, and yet the world of experience, anomalous in character, somehow exists. But he does not make the impossible effort of transforming this factual 'somehow' into a logical principle. The world of experience is there before us, though it is ultimately non-existent. Shankara does not say that the felt existence of the world-appearance can be denied on the strength of logic. But he does say that consistently with a logical principle, ultimate existence cannot be ascribed to the world of appearance. He illustrates the possibility of felt existence along with ultimate non-existence by illusions, hallucinations and dreams. Thus

Shankara retains an out-and-out intellectual attitude, in spite of his recognition of the real meaning of Bradley's 'somehow.'/ But he does not like Bradley press the claim of this 'somehow' against the intellectual demand. But intellect is no organ of immediate apprehension. It operates mediately and as such the suggestion of the possibility of an immediate apprehension of the intellectually constructed scheme of reality is not precluded by the same.

From this the fundamental difference between the two systems is quite apparent. Bradley is a concrete Absolutist, for whom reality is richer for all discords; whereas Shankara is an abstract Absolutist who cannot ultimately leave scope for any plurality in the Absolute. For Bradley pure being is as good as pure nothing, whereas to Shankara pure being is one and only one reality. For Bradley, appearances must somehow be real, whereas to Shankara they must somehow be unreal. For Bradley the demand of thought must be transcended, for Shankara the demand of thought must be rigorously adhered to. Bradley of course gives the impression that a knower of the Absolute becomes the Absolute and this seems to reiterate Shankara. But judged by a critical standard the Bradleyan standard is loose, because in Bradley being merged in the Absolute does not mean total negation. It also stands for an affirmation of what has already been negated. To this point we have already referred. But Bradley's concrete Absolutism is in the last resort, mystical in character and herein it differs from Hegel's. It is customary to read mysticism in Hegel as is done by James, Russell and others. But, Hegel himself does not, rightly or wrongly, give expression to the futility of intellect. On the contrary, he is an uncompromising champion of intellec-

tualism. Bradley could see through the hollowness of this Hegelian claim in view of Hegel's alleged logical reconciliation of opposites, and at the same time he feels the necessity of such a reconciliation. This is why he wavers between intellectualism and mysticism. As an intellectualist he is an opponent of Hegel, whereas as an anti-intellectualist

he is a Hegelian, and the latter is Bradley's ultimate position. In the former role, he moves under the guise of Shankara, whereas in the latter role (which is his true role) he is an out-and-out opponent of Shankara. This is why his so-called similarity with Shankara is not merely misunderstood, but proves to be a deceptive snare.

SUBSTANCE IN SWINBURNE

BY JAMES H. COUSINS

The alleged obscurity of certain passages in Robert Browning's poetry has gone the way of similar notions by means of which mental inertia has tried to save itself the trouble of making peace with the unfamiliar. The wonders of American and English free verse have proved to be of the usual nine-day order, or perhaps nine years and a bit. The superstition that Swinburne's poetry is all emotional cry with little or no poetical wool will shortly go the same way, though the drift has not yet set in with tidal emphasis. As recently as 1939, in an introduction of a new selection of poems by Swinburne, Laurence Binyon, an informed critic and an admirable if not red-headed poet, suggested the possibility of a reaction 'against harsh matter and deflated rhythms' in prevalent English poetry, and 'a revived enjoyment of Swinburne's clear and confident singing voice.' But the revival would only be attentive to Swinburne's singing, not to what his singing said, though Mr. Binyon had detected some 'hard thinking' in certain of his poems. 'We expect from him,' said Mr. Binyon, 'no broad and deep humanity, no tender intimacies of perception.'

And yet some of Swinburne's poems cry out in sympathy with the physically, socially and mentally suppressed. So hot was he against human wrongs, that he aspired towards 'the perfect Republic' as a means of eliminating the restrictions under which humanity in his time and place laboured. His poems on children, though (perhaps because) he was childless, throb with gentle humanity. His perception of the realities of life reappeared through his ornate and enthusiastic conception in lines and passages that have only to be penetrated by understanding to find a mind fearlessly addressing itself to the problems of life and death, the mind of a poet who will not be deluded by half truths,

Who seeks not stars by day, nor light
And heavy heat of day by night.

Between Swinburne's intuition of things and his intellectual and emotional evaluation of them there is, it is true, a very marked lesion due to the impact of a dull and ruthless society on a specially sensitive temperament and imagination. It is, on the surface, possible to characterize 'Tristram of Lyonesse' as a story of erotic neuroticism, its only approach to the realities of the inner life being

its attack on religious belief and practice as he saw it in the last half of the nineteenth century in England. But one has only to read with full attentiveness the first paragraph of the *Prelude* to the poem (a single sentence with nothing stronger than a semicolon between the subject in the first line and the predicate in the forty-second) to find an exposition of the origin, nature and function of the cohesive principle in the universe that men call love: love that is, as sung in the *Prelude*, the perpetual inspiration of life, that is within things as well as without them, that holds all things together, that created all things in the universe, that can bind as well as set free, that is source and fulfilment of earthly things, that cannot be suppressed, cannot be slain, that is its own justification, that can neither be bought nor sold, that exists by its own grace in both the desire and the wisdom of life. This is certainly of the nature of substance.

As far as I can understand, both from experience and study, the operations and gradations of the creative poetical consciousness, I am convinced that such a poetical Upanishad in English on love, that could be expanded into volumes of commentary, is a revelation of the real poet; not of his thought, which is bound by the Comtist positivism that he adopted, but of his free imaginative intuition, like the rare emergences of the true Francis Thompson out of the theological clouds that enwrapped his genius and to which his genius imparted its own golden glow.

We see the change from exalted vision to intellectual formulae in the trough that follows the wave of poetical imagination in Swinburne's *Prelude* to which I have referred. The superbly eloquent and radiant proclamation of the divine origin of love opens thus.—

Love, that is first and last of all things made,
The light that has the living world for shade,
The spirit that for temporal veil has on
The souls of all men woven in unison,
One fiery raiment with all lives inwrought
And lights of sunny and starry deed and thought,
And always through new act and passion new
Shines the divine same body and beauty through,
The body spiritual of fire and light
That is to worldly noon as noon to night

And this and succeeding glorifications of love, that are as far above the sentimentalities of the nineteenth century as they were above the sensualities of the twentieth, are contracted with breath-catching suddenness into the assertion that such love

Led these twain to the lifeless life of night.

The descent from the stratosphere of the imagination to the ground-level idea that knowledge was limited to the phenomena of life was so steep that it forced the poet to an elaborately splendid statement of the philosophy of human futility ended by death; the philosophy that, because we cannot see, hear or touch the dead, they do not exist; that nothing exists beyond physical proof—a test that would reduce to nonsense both the poet's affirmations of the origin and nature of love, and his denial of life beyond death which is based on classical and historical persons and events that he could not bring to his own test.

Neither Swinburne's affirmation of the superhuman source of love, which,

ex (positivist) *hypothesis*, is beyond proof, nor his denial of post-mortem existence to the human instruments of love's expression and persistence, which psychical science, to the credit of the cosmos, has disproven, is essential to the tragical story of Tristram and Iseult in which the occidental mind has found pleasure for a number of centuries. They are glorious irrelevancies that a properly trained tutor in English would blue-pencil out of the script of a student. They are impartations of Swinburne's own imaginative response to life and his intellectual interest in its problems.

(Among the English poets he embodies a peculiar duality of consciousness, half-way between the spiritual affirmation of Shelley and the spiritual negation of James Thomson, that gleams through single lines and takes a stanza to itself in a song in 'Tristram')

O which is elder, night or light, who knows?

And life or love, which first of these twain grows?

For life is born of love to wail and cry,

And love is born of life to heal his woes,
And light of night, that day should live and die.

Yet I believe that Swinburne's ultimate attitude to the universe, behind the two-eyed external mind, was not dualistic but monistic.

We have a hint in the direction of this belief in a comparison of the Prelude and the introduction to Book IX, the final section, of 'Tristram' A transcription of the first clause and the latter will show the extraordinary parallel between it and the first clause of the Prelude quoted above.

Fate, that was born ere spirit and flesh were made,

The fire that fills man's life with light and shade;

The power beyond all godhead which puts on

All forms of multitudinous unison,
A raiment of eternal change inwrought

With shapes and hues more subtly spun than thought,

Where all things old bear fruit of all things new,

And one deep chord throbs all the music through,

The chord of change unchanging, shadow and light

Inseparable as reverberate day and night.

A comparison of the two clauses will reveal the curious facts, first, that the same terminal rhymes are used, and second that the figures of speech are similar and follow the same succession. But an examination of the lines brings out the further challenging fact that, within this similarity, a change has taken place in the attributes of fate contrasted with those of love: for the light of love, there is the fire of fate; for spirit, power; for souls, forms; for deeds and thoughts, shapes and hues; for new act and passion, old things bearing new; for divine body and beauty, one deep chord; for noon beyond night, inseparable day and night. The same parallels in rhyme, with the exception of one couplet, and of figures and ideas, is maintained through the single sentence that, as in the Prelude, has the subject in the first line and the predicate in the forty-second. The change in attributes from those of love to those of fate moves from invincible creative benevolence to equally invincible disinterested doom-dealing by fate that

Leads life through death past sense of day and night.

The attributes of love are, fine, subjective, original, single: those of fate are,

strong, objective, derived, dual) The two sets belong to the complementary phases of life, the noumenal that is receptive of essentials and creative, the phenomenal that is formative, administrative and destructive. According to the poem, love and fate led Tristram and Iseult to the same end; love, 'to the lifeless life of night,' fate, 'through death past sense of day and night.)

It would be easy to deflate the figurative rhetoric of the first terminal by pointing out the mutual cancellation of the words 'lifeless life'; and of the second by indicating the impossibility of drawing a living entity through and past the positive terminal, death; but this would be an unpoetical treatment of poetry. It would also be possible to interpret the first apparent contradiction as a summary description of a state of being that was still a state of being though rid of the details that we associate with life; and the second as an implied continuation of consciousness, as consciousness, on to a super-sensuous level of being. Both interpretations would be unwitting anticipations, that would have outraged the normal Swinburne, of findings of a super-physical science that was beginning its life at his death. But such interpretation, though attractive as literary discovery, is not necessary to support the belief that Swinburne was fundamentally monistic or unitarian, in his view of life, despite the multiplicity of mental and emotional entities in states of agreement as well as of disagreement

that the universe presents to the poetical imagination much more acutely than it does to the mind of the man of affairs.

That love and fate, as set out in the two parallel passages in 'Tristram . . .' are the inner and outer aspects of one cosmic entity under whose direction humanity, to the external eye, appears and disappears, is clear. The declaration that fate 'is pure of love and clean of hate' is not an assertion of separateness between love and fate, but of the disinterestedness of fate without any leanings of its own in love for or hate against any of the human beings whom it conducts on their way under a destiny of which it is the agent, not the originator. Fate may be older than humanity, 'born ere spirit and flesh were made': but love is older, and younger, than fate, 'first and last of all things made.' That neither love nor fate could function without the other, or without humanity, is a clear inference. (The putting of them to the same work by the poet, the directing of humanity to life and past it ('From the great deep to the great deep' as Tennyson put it) is not an unobservant duplication or an unintelligent repetition at the end of two passages on which he bestowed meticulous attention in rhymes and successive ideas. It is the sight of two imaginative eyes that focussed themselves to a single super-physical vision.)

(To be continued)

THE MESSAGE OF THE UPANISHADS

By PROF. S. N. L. SHRIVASTAVA, M.A.

(Concluded from the previous issue)

COSMOGONIC THEORIES IN THE UPANISHADS

In the Upanishads we come across a puzzling variety of cosmogonic theories, now postulating one of the elements to be the source of all things, now declaring the Ātman to be that from which all things have emanated, and so on. Prof. Ranade brings all these theories under two main heads, impersonalistic and personalistic. 'Among the impersonalistic theories' he tells us, 'may be included the theories which regard either or all of the elements as the substratum of things, or even such abstract conceptions as not-Being, or Being, or Life-force as lying at the root of all things whatsoever. Among the personalistic theories are theories which try to account for the origin of creation from the Ātman or God, and insist in various ways either on the dualistic aspect of creation, or the emanatory, or even the highly philosophic aspect implied in Theism proper.' Professor Ranade* feels quite sure that 'when the Upanishadic Sages regard the elements as the source of things, we must take them to mean what they say, and not, as certain later commentators under the spell of their theological idea have done, regard those elements as equivalent to deities.' He contends that when the Upanishadic passages trace the source of things to water (Āpah), air (Vāyu) or fire (Agni), we have cosmogonic speculation similar to that of the ancient

Greek thinkers, Thales, Anaximenes and Heraclitus. Besides water, air, fire, we have also in the Upanishads Being (Sat), Non-Being (Asat), Prāna and the Ātman postulated as the ultimate source of all existents. In face of all these varying accounts, it is difficult to say which precisely is the Upanishadic theory of the origin of the world. It is however certain that the Upanishads do take the Ātman as the First Principle and we do find them disparaging materialistic and vitalistic accounts of creation in face of the theory of the emergence of the world out of Ātman. The world emerges out of the Ātman as sparks fly from the fire, the threads from the spider, or the sound from the flute, or as plants shoot out from the earth or as hairs grow on the body. According to the theory of emanation of the Upanishads, the Ātman, the Source, remains Full as ever and suffers no diminution of being even after the world in its wholeness is produced therefrom.'

THE ULTIMATE REALITY AND THE WAY TO ITS ATTAINMENT

If we are asked to point to the core of the Upanishadic teachings, a central message behind and beneath their variegated speculations, we shall have to refer to their doctrine of the Ātman as the *ultimate* Reality and the mystical realization of this Ātman as the Goal of life. The Ātman is the enduring, innermost and ultimate essence of all

* Vide *A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy* by R. D. Ranade: Chap. II.

‘ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुपपद्यते ।
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

existence, the Truth, hidden as it were, by the external wrappings of physical, physiological and psychological principles. In the characteristic style of the Kenopanishad 'the Self must be regarded as the ear of ear, as the mind of mind, as the speech of speech, as the breath of breath, as the eye of eye. Those who know the Self thus are released from this world and become immortal That which speech is unable to give out, but that which itself gives out speech, know that to be the ultimate reality, not that which people worship in vain. That which the mind is unable to think, but which thinks the mind, know that to be the ultimate reality; that which the eye is unable to see, but that which enables us to see the eye, know that to be the ultimate reality; that which the ear does not hear, but that which enables us to perceive the ear, that which breath is not able to breathe, but that by which breath itself is breathed, know that to be the final reality.'

To know this Ātman by direct mystical realization is to reach the Goal of life, is to go beyond all sorrow, to attain absolute sinlessness and transcendental freedom. This integral or mystical realization of the Ātman is the Higher knowledge or Illumination (Parā Vidyā) as distinguished from lower knowledge (Aparā Vidyā) which is mere intellectual erudition howsoever vast or encyclopaedic. Even a knowledge of the Rig-Veda, Sāma-Veda, Yajur-Veda and Atharva-Veda is classed under the latter head, Parā Vidyā being nothing else but that gnosis or illumination whereby that Imperishable is realized (yayā tadaksharam adhigamyate). To let go this life here on earth without Self-realization, says the Kenopanishad, is to keep in store for the future a huge disaster. (इह चेद्देहीव सत्यमस्ति न चेद्दिवावेदीभ्यमहती विपश्चिः ।)

Now, how to realize this Ātman? Intellectual discussion alone cannot lead to living experience. The condition *sine qua non* of Self-realization is absolute good conduct, a snow-white purity of heart, and a composed and imperturbable disposition of mind. 'This Ātman cannot be realized by intellectual understanding alone,' says the Kathopanishad, 'unless the man has turned his back towards evil conduct, unless he has become quiet and composed. and unless he has curbed the turbulent tendencies of the mind.' The Mundaka Upanishad lays down: 'By truthfulness, austerity, proper insight and continence, is this Ātman realized. Thus do sages of purified heart perceive in their inner being the Bright and Effulgent One.' The story of Satyakāma Jābāla as told in the Chhandogya Upanishad accentuates the value of truthfulness as the highest requisite virtue for an aspirant of Truth-realization. Satyakāma was the son of Jabālā, a woman who had led a wanton life in her youth. When he came of age, he asked his mother from whom he was born. The mother replied, 'Oh, my child! I do not know from whom thou art born. Moving about wantonly in youth I begot thee; I cannot say who thy father is. All that I know is that my name is Jabālā and your name is Satyakāma; so declare yourself Satyakāma Jābāla when asked.' Satyakāma approached his spiritual teacher for instruction, and when asked by the latter his father's name, said straightway what his mother had told him. 'Heigh!' exclaimed the teacher, 'such words could not have come from anyone who was not born of a Brahmin. Come on, I shall initiate thee, for thou hast not swerved from the path of truthfulness.' Moral perfection, then, is according to the

Upanishadic sages the first requisite in the path of Self-realization.

This emphatic insistence of the Upanishads on perfect morality as the condition *sine qua non* of Self-realization should remove the misunderstanding from the minds of those critics of Hinduism who think that it is unethical or makes light of morality since it envisages the state of perfection as beyond good and evil. Of course, Hinduism does declare that in the ultimate state of transcendental freedom the 'moral stress', as every other kind of stress, is transcended; but it lays down with equal emphasis that morality is *necessary* to reach the Goal. As we must sail along the current in order to reach beyond it, so we must follow the path of morality to come to the state of supermoralism. Furthermore, the *transcendence* of good and evil in Hindu thought is clearly distinguishable from the *defiance* of good and evil by the superman in Nietzsche's teachings on the one hand, and on the other, from the theory of the *fusion* of good and evil in the fullness of the Absolute in the philosophy of Bradley.

The next step for the aspirant of Self-realization is the cultivation of inwardness. Without turning the gaze inward Self-realization is impossible—inward, of course, not to the psychological processes of the mind, but beyond that to the *Ātman*. 'Our senses have been devised by God' says the Kathopanishad, 'with a tendency to peer outside; so does man find it natural to look outwards rather than to the indwelling *Ātman*. Rarely does a wise man, desirous of immortality, restrain his out-going senses, and perceive the *Ātman* within.' Or, as the Shvetashvatara Upanishad puts it: 'The soul, encased in the body, the city with nine gates, delighteth in the

outer world.'" The man who would live the life of immortality must come out of the mazes of attractions and distractions in the outer world, must cease to be lured by the siren song of life, must snap the cobweb of the delusion of the senses.

Next to the cultivation of inwardness, resort to some definite *Upāsana* is the third essential requisite for the aspirant for Self-realization. In a very suggestive passage the Mundaka Upanishad says: 'We should take in hand the great weapon, the bow of the Upanishads, and fix thereto the arrow of the soul sharpened by *Upāsana*; then pulling it with all attention, hit the supreme target, the imperishable Brahman.' Identifying the quintessence of the Upanishads with *Pranava* or *Om*, the passage continues: '*Pranava* is the bow, the self the arrow, and Brahman the point to be hit; hit It with undistracted attention; like the arrow (going straight to the mark), let thy devotion (to Brahman) be.' Amongst the *Upasanas* mentioned in the Upanishads, the foremost place is given to the meditation on the sacred Mantram *Om*. A passage in the Shvetashvatara Upanishad says: 'Making one's own body the lower piece of wood, and the *Pranava* the upper piece of wood, and practising churning in the form of meditation, one should realize God as one would find out something hidden.'

स्वदेहमर्यां कृत्वा प्रणां चोत्तराग्निम् ।

ज्याननिर्मयनाभ्यासादेवं परमेष्ठिगूढवत् ॥

—श्वे० उप० १-१४

While meditating on *Om* its meaning should be clearly borne in mind. *Om* is the verbal symbol of the All, the *Ātman*. It represents the entirety of conscious experience comprised of

नवद्वारे पुरे देही हंसो ज्ञेयावते बहिः ।

—श्वे० उप० १-१८

Jagrat or the Waking, Swapna or the Dream, Sushupti or the Deep Dreamless Sleep and the Turiya or the trans-phenomenal experience of the Absolute. The first three states are respectively represented by the three syllables of which Om is comprised viz. अ, उ and ऋ and the fourth syllableless part which it is supposed to contain represents the last. Swami Vivekananda in his Raja Yoga has tellingly argued that the word Om is the best and most universal symbol of God in so far as it is the ultimate generalization of all possible sounds. 'The word Om' he writes, 'is composed of three letters A, U and M. The first letter A, is the root sound, the key-note, and it is pronounced without touching any part of the tongue or palate; M represents the last sound in the series, being produced by closing the lips, and in pronouncing the letter U the sound rolls from the very root to the end of the sounding board of the mouth. Thus Om represents the whole phenomena of sound production. That being so, it must be the natural symbol, the matrix of all the various sounds. It denotes the whole range and possibility of all the words that can be made.'

The direct perception of the Ātman results according to the Upanishads from a supreme meditative effort. The following verse from the Kathopanishad enunciates the general *modus operandi* of the meditative discipline required for Self-realization:

यच्छेद्वाङ्मनसि प्राज्ञस्तथच्छेज्ज्ञानं आत्मनि ।

ज्ञानमात्मनि महति निबच्छेत्तथच्छेज्ज्ञानं आत्मनि ॥

'The wise should merge speech into the mind, the mind into intelligence, intelligence into Mahat, and finally Mahat into the quiescent Ātman.' That is, we should stop the operations of all our faculties by merging the function of each outer faculty into the

inner one that conditions it. We must recede inwards from speech, the last and outermost manifestation of intelligence, to the Supreme Intelligence, the foundational Consciousness or the Ātman. In speech all our intelligible experience finds expression; all that is in any way intelligible to us we express in speech, in words. But thought precedes speech and is the condition of speech. Speech has its birth in thought, in the mind. It is the inner thought-activity that in outward manifestation is speech. If therefore thinking is to be intensified, its out-going energy in the form of speech must be conserved by stopping speech. To intensify thought speech must be stopped. It is a matter of common experience that when we think seriously we remain silent. Similarly intelligence precedes and is the condition of thought. Thought-knowledge or conceptual knowledge presupposes a more basic intelligence. It is this intelligence that expresses and manifests itself in thought-forms. This intelligence can be intensified if thought-activity is stopped. But when the foundational Consciousness back of this intelligence is itself to be manifested, even this veil of intelligence must be removed. Speech, mind and the intelligence are the corridors through which we must pass in order to reach the Inmost Shrine, the Ātman. The Upanishads often reiterate the saying that the Ātman is concealed in the inmost cavity of our being—निहितो गुहायाम्; and we are asked to meditate thereupon.

In the Shvetashvatara Upanishad which is comparatively a later Upanishad, the spiritual practice advised takes a definite Yogic form. Here are some passages from that Upanishad: 'Placing the body in a straight posture, holding the chest, throat and

head erect, and drawing the senses and the mind into the heart, the knowing one should cross over all the fearful streams by means of the raft of Brahman. Controlling the senses with an effort, and regulating the activities in the body, one should breathe out through the nostrils when the vital activities become gentle. Then the knowing one, without being in the least distracted, should keep his hold on the mind as on the reins attached to restive horses. One should perform one's exercises in concentration, resorting to caves and such other pure places helpful to its practice—places where the

ground is level without pebbles, and the scenery pleasing to the eyes; where there is no wind, dust, fire, dampness and disturbing noises' (Shve. Up. II. 8-10).

Let me conclude with a verse of the same Upanishad: 'Great is the glory of the Immanent Soul who is all-pervading, all-knowing, infinite and self-luminous. Only those rare few who know, undergo the necessary discipline and spiritual practices. The wise do, indeed, control the activities of the intellect, and practise meditation and concentration' (Shve. Up. II. 4).

(GURU) GOVIND SINGH, THE MILITARY MYSTIC

BY TEJUMAL KALACHAND MIRCHANDANI, B.A., LL.B.

He was born in the year 1666 A.D. at Patna. When he was a child of nine years his father was in jail, and because of his refusal to accept Islam, was about to be put to death by the Moghul Emperor Aurangzeb. Tej Bahadur the ninth Sikh Guru, the father of Guru Govind Singh then transmitted to him the seed spirit, the seed light, 'the flow of limpid water,' the spirit which was transmitted by Guru Nanak to his successor Angad and from Guru to Guru. By the outpouring of such a spirit, the infusion of splendour and the liquid light, Govind Singh was immediately transformed from man into God. He saw God as He in reality was, face to face with his eyes. He realized his identity with God and saw the whole of the future spread before him. After his father's death he was installed as Guru.

At that time Hindus and Muham-madans were fighting with each other. Under the Moghul Emperor Aurangzeb,

inhumanities were perpetrated in the name of Islam. Hindus were forcibly converted into Islam and were trampled under foot if they did not accept it. They were excluded from State service and holding religious meetings. Their temples were destroyed and mosques were built in their places. They did not enjoy social, political or religious freedom. Hindu rajahs also ill-treated their subjects. The higher classes of Hindus looked down with contempt upon the lower classes. The Hindus were divided into various warring sects, each sect worshipped its own God and considered Him superior to the Gods of other sects. Pandits indulged in idle discussions on the relationship between God and the universe. The followers of the six systems of Hindu philosophy and the three schools of Dvaitism (dualism), Vishishtadvaitism (qualified non-dualism) and Advaitism (non-dualism) were fighting with each other, each advocating the supre-

macy of his own system and school without realizing that these systems and philosophies were different ways of looking at the same Truth from different points of view. They did not make the attempt to see the One and Infinite God in their innermost heart with the aid of a perfect teacher as enjoined by their scriptures and, therefore, they did not understand the true import of the Shastras. The Brahmins had reduced religion to mere forms and ceremonies. They performed various ceremonies and various exercises without thinking of obtaining the knowledge of God in Truth. They had fallen from the path of virtue and were addicted to all sorts of sense pleasures. Again, the relatives of Guru Govind Singh were divided against him on the question of his succession. Such was the position in which the Guru found himself when he was installed at the age of nine years. He had to face the odds, destroy the existing system of government under the mighty Moghul Emperor, bring about the liberation of Hindus trodden under foot, consolidate all the various conflicting sects of Hindus, infuse manly spirit into them and turn them into seer-soldiers and bring about loving relationship between Hindus and Muhammadans and completely unite them. He had to explain to them that the cardinal tenets of both the religions were the same. He had to defend the religion and protect the weak from the strong. He had to make men virtuous and make them realize their identity with God. How was all this to be done by a child of nine years? How was he to destroy the then existing system of government? He found no other method except armed resistance, not for destruction but for protection, not as an offensive measure but as a defensive measure. He wanted the sword to be used as a shield.

After his father's death the Guru prepared himself for the life of military defence and gathered a large number of followers and formed a regular army of saintly soldiers. The lowly, the despised confectioners, barbers, dhobis and sweepers became members of the mystical brotherhood of sage-soldiers. He supplied his followers with arms and arrows and practised with them archery and musket shooting. His durbar became a military camp and religious and mystical centre. Days were passed in reciting and interpreting the mystical hymns of the holy Granth Sahib and in the narration of the military exploits of heroes like Sri Rama and Sri Krishna and in hunting, shooting and other military exercises. The Guru got the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Puranas and the epics Mahabharata and Ramayana translated into easy Hindi. For twenty years the Guru trained his followers in the above manner.

When the Guru was thirty years old he invited all his Sikhs to attend the great Vaishakhi fair at Anandpura. He pitched a tent on an open plot and ordered a confidential Sikh to go at midnight and tie up five goats in the adjoining enclosure. Next morning he drew up his sword and asked his Sikhs if there was any one among them ready to die for him. After some time one gave his name. The Guru took him within the enclosure. He cut off a goat's head with one stroke of sword. The sound was heard by the Sikhs outside. The blood passed through the drain outside and was seen by every Sikh. The Guru showed the dripping sword to his Sikhs. The Guru again asked them if there was any one else among them ready to die for him. In this manner he got one by one five Sikhs ready to die for him. The Guru then said to the Sikhs, 'In the time of Guru Nanak there was found only one

deserving devotee named Angad, in my time there are found five Sikhs totally devoted to me. The Guru then caused his five devoted Sikhs to stand up. After sweetening some holy water he stirred it up with the two-edged sword. He then repeated over it some sacred verses which he had selected for the occasion and dissolved in it the divine spirit, the Guru then gave each of the five a palmfull of Amrita to drink. He sprinkled it five times on their head and eyes and told them to repeat, 'Wah Guru ji ki Khalsa, Wah Guru ji ki Fateh.' He then embraced each of his five Sikhs and fixed his gaze into the eyes of each of them in order to give each of them that transcendent experience of Self where no speech or intelligence can enter. The eyes of the Guru and his five Sikhs met. Heart met hearts. The embrace was only a device for transmitting the spirit. The Guru cast dazzling and penetrating glance into them and transmitted the seed spirit, the seed light, the pure living word, the holy ambrosial nectarous Name, to each of them by some inscrutable and mysterious manner. Each of them became one with God. Each of them saw the supreme Self in his innermost, immaterial, luminous, lotus-shaped heart. Each of them knew God as He was. Each of them realized his identity with God. Each of them saw that every thing was God and nothing but God and God was the sole Reality. Like a bright flash of lightning everything became manifest to each of them.

When the Guru had thus administered baptism to his five tried Sikhs, he fell at their feet and stood up before them with clasped hands and begged them to administer baptism in the same way to him as he had administered to them. They represented their unworthiness to baptize the great Guru.

The Guru replied to them, 'As Guru Nanak made Angad his Guru so have I made you my Guru. You are in my Form and I am in your Form. You and I are one for ever. There is no difference between you and me. He who thinketh that there is any difference between us erreth.' According to his direction the five Sikhs baptized the Guru in the same manner as they were baptized.

This is not merely external baptism but microcosmic baptism with holy immaterial Light, and with pure immaterial water.

Several other Sikhs were baptized in the same manner. Guru thus established a Khalsa brotherhood of seersoldiers, military mystics and said, 'He in whose innermost heart the Light of the perfect One shineth is a pure member of Khalsa.' 'Khalsa is the Guru, and Guru is the Khalsa.' The Guru then told the Khalsas to wear five articles with the initial K., viz. Kesh (long hair), Kanga (comb), Kirpan (sword), Keech (short trouser), Krab (steel bracelet). The Guru then called the five Sikhs whom he had baptized, Panch Piaras (five friends) or Panch Muktas (five liberated ones). Guru asked the Khalsas to lift up the sword only in defence of the faith, with God's Name fixed in the innermost heart and told them to meditate and love the glorious Name continuously with each breath, while doing good actions.

Guru Govind Singh won many battles. His success filled the neighbouring rajahs and the Moghul Emperor Aurangzeb, with fear. Many Khalsas deserted the Guru, when he was at Anandpura. The Hindu rajahs and the Moghul Emperor combined and their combined army besieged Anandpura where the Guru lived. The Guru and his followers had to evacuate the city. The Guru's two sons were killed

in the battle and his remaining two sons fled and took refuge in a Brahmin's house. The Brahmin betrayed them to the local Muhammadan governor. They were asked by the governor on penalty of death to embrace Islam. But they declined to do so and so they were cruelly buried alive under a wall.

The Emperor Aurangzeb invited Guru Govind Singh but he declined the offer and wrote him a letter in Persian saying that he had no faith in the word or the oath of the Emperor. Soon after the Emperor died. There was a dispute among his sons and Bahadurshah who eventually succeeded to the throne sought his help. The Emperor Bahadurshah had so much confidence in him that he placed him at the head of his own army.

The Guru now realized that his mission was over. He had consolidated the various sects of Hindus into one united community and brought about union between Hindus and Muhammadans. He had interpreted pure Hinduism to Hindus and pure Islam to Muhammadans. He had taught men that though the Shariat or Karma Kanda of both religions was different there was no difference in the cardinal tenets of both religions as he said, 'Allah and Alekh are the same, the Purans and the Kuran are the same, and they are all alike.' While the Guru reached Nanda on the bank of Godavari, he was mortally wounded by a Pathan assassin. The Pathan was only an outward instrument.

The Sikhs went to the Guru to bid farewell and asked him who was to succeed him as Guru. He said to them in reply, 'O beloved Khalsa, know that the Light of the Imperishable God ever shineth in your innermost hearts. O Khalsa, ever remember the true Name. I have entrusted you to the Immortal God. Where there are five

Sikhs assembled, who abide by the Guru's Word, know that I am in the midst of them. Henceforth the Guru shall be the Khalsa and the Khalsa the Guru. I have infused my spirit into the Khalsa, and the holy Granth Sahib. O beloved Khalsa, let him who desireth to behold Me, obey the Granth Sahib. And let him who desireth to meet Me, diligently search its hymns.'

The command of the Granth Sahib and its hymns to every Sikh is that he should first know God is truth by seeing Him in his innermost heart. With his eyes, with the aid of a living teacher and then love and know God and meditate on the living word, the Holy name, the metaphysical point in his innermost heart continuously with every breath, day and night, while sitting, sleeping or standing, hear the Inner Voice audibly, without any effort on his part, till the entire universe disappeared and God remained as the sole Reality. Such a perfect teacher transfigures himself into a Being of white Divine Light exceeding in many degrees the combined light of thousands of suns, opens the knot of the heart of his disciple, reverses the inverted lotus of his heart, opens the tenth gate in his nine-gated body, awakens the Kundalini power in him and either by touch or dazzling penetrating glance or some other mysterious manner transmits the seed spirit, the seed light to the body of his disciple and showing him God face to face, blends him with God. Without seeing God it is not possible to know God and without knowing God it is not possible to love God and without loving God it is not possible to be blended with God. Such a vision is not possible without the aid of a living perfect teacher. He who transforms himself from man to God with the aid of a living perfect teacher, alone obeys the Granth Sahib

and can even now meet Guru Govind Singh in his inward Form.

The Guru then bathed and putting on new clothes said to his Khalsa, 'Wah Guru ji ki Khalsa, Wah Guru ji ki Fateh.' The Guru then breathed his last. His body was cremated. While Sikhs were mourning a Sikh saw Guru Govind Singh with his original body with a bow in his hands and an arrow fastened to his waist and he had conversation with him. His immortal gold-like body, spirit body which can assume the same physical body or any physical body at will had never died, what was cremated was his illusive, mirage like body, a mere semblance.

Guru Govind Singh had composed several hymns and prayers which are pantheistic and idealistic in nature and in which he said, 'Thou art the Singer, Thou art the Dancer, Thou art the Trumpet-player.' 'Thou art Thine own temple, Thou worshippeth Thyself.' 'The Creator projected Himself, His creatures assumed endless shapes.' 'God made the extension of the world from Himself.' 'As from one heap of dust several particles of dust fill the air and on filling it again blend with the dust, as in one stream millions of waves are produced, the waves being made of water all become water, so from God's form, non-sentient and sentient things are manifested and springing from Him shall be united in Him again.' 'As light

is blended with darkness and darkness with light so all things have sprung from God and shall be united in Him.' 'God is indivisible.' 'The fourteen worlds God made as play and again blended them with Himself.' 'All men are equal. It is through error they appear different.' This view is pantheistic. 'The world is the play of God. God is indivisible and therefore the whole of God is in every part. Everything is God and nothing but God.' Again the Guru says, 'O God! Thou alone art, Thou alone art.' 'The world is unreal, God alone is real.' 'God hath no quoit, no mark, no colour, no caste, no lineage, no form, no complexion, no outline, no costume.' This is idealism which asserts that one God alone exists and that there is none and nothing besides Him. God is divested of everything in nature. The universe is a mere appearance of God.

Mystically each of the ten Sikh Gurus was the Word incarnate. Therefore Guru Govind Singh has said, 'He who believes that the ten Gurus are one is a Sikh of mine.' Guru Govind Singh was therefore Word incarnate in flesh, the indwelling God in the innermost heart of everyone, the mystic Govind, the mysterious 'Me,' the only Eternal servant of God. He still exists in the innermost heart of everyone and can be seen with these eyes with the help of a living Guru.

'If a Hindu is not spiritual I do not call him a Hindu. In other countries a man may be political first, and then he may have a little religion, but here in India the first and the foremost duty of our lives is to be spiritual first, and then, if there is time, let other things come.'

—Swami Vivekananda

SWAMI PREMANANDA

BY BRAHMACHARI SHIVACHAITANYA

Sri Ramakrishna used to say that a class of men appear in the world from time to time, who spurn all the allurements of the world, its gold, its power, and its honour, and who bend all their efforts to the service of men, guiding their faltering steps to the door of the Divine. Because of the special manifestation of God in them, he would call them *Ishwarakotis*. He often referred half a dozen among his disciples to this class; and to this select group belonged Swami Premananda. Talent and greatness like cream do not always float to the top; oftentimes they lie hidden like gems in the dark caves of the sea. And though the aroma of this saint of angelic beauty and sweetness did not travel beyond a small circle of devotees and acquaintances, yet he occupies a place of great eminence among the children of Sri Ramakrishna.

Swami Premananda was born in 1861 in the prosperous and picturesque village of Antpur, in the district of Hooghly, Bengal. His parents came of two well-to-do and influential Kayastha families of the village. His father Taraprasanna Ghosh was a man of piety. He had inherited enough means to meet the demands of the family with ease and to conduct the daily service of the household deity, Sri Lakshminarayan Jiu. Taraprasanna Ghosh was married to Matangini Dasi, daughter of Abhoy Chandra Mitra. Like her husband, she was also of devout dispositions; and the husband and the wife formed a happy pair.

The couple had a daughter and three sons. The daughter's name was Krishnabhamini, and the sons were

called Tulsiram, Baburam, and Santiram. Of these Baburam came to be known in later life as Swami Premananda.

The marriage of Krishnabhamini with Balaram Bose of Calcutta brought Taraprasanna's family into close touch with Sri Ramakrishna some years later. Balaram Bose, who subsequently became one of the foremost householder disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, owned a big estate. But his interest was more in things spiritual than in the temporal affairs of life; and he spent most of his time in religious practices and studies. At his very first meeting with Sri Ramakrishna, the latter's penetrating gaze recognized him to be one of his inner circle of disciples. Balaram paid frequent visits to Sri Ramakrishna. Often he would take his wife and children with him. One day he took his mother-in-law also to Sri Ramakrishna. The devoted lady was highly pleased with the meeting and felt herself blessed by seeing him.

Born of pious parents, the boy would have a natural slant towards spirituality. But blood cannot explain all the rich endowments native to the soul of young Baburam. A few memories of his childhood accidentally preserved acquire a great significance in the light of later events. Renunciation spoke through the broken accents of his childhood. When a mere stripling of a few summers, if anybody teased him about marriage, he would lisp out his protestations, 'Oh, don't marry me, don't, don't; I will die then.' His mates in the village school were drawn to this young cherub by the invisible tie of

affection; they regarded him as their near and dear one. At eight years his ideal was to lead a life of renunciation in a hut shut out from the public view by a thick wall of trees, with a fellow monk. Later on we shall see how correctly his boyish dreams anticipated future events. He loved to associate with holy men from the period of his adolescence. The sight of ascetics on the banks of the Ganges drew the comely boy to them; and in their company he would be unaware of the flight of time.

Passing out of the village school, Baburam went to Calcutta for higher studies. After joining the Aryan School for some time, he finally entered the Shyampukur Branch of the Metropolitan Institution. At this time Mahendra Nath Gupta, the celebrated author of the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, happened to be the headmaster of the School. He had already come in contact with Sri Ramakrishna, and he used to visit the latter frequently. By another curious coincidence, Rakhal (Swami Brahmananda) was also a student of the School and read in the same class as Baburam. The two boys became quickly drawn to each other by a hidden tie, and there soon sprang up between them an intimate relationship which was only deepened with the passage of years. About this time Rakhal also came under the influence of Sri Ramakrishna and began visiting Dakshineswar now and then. These contacts with M. and Rakhal brought to Baburam's notice the holy personality of Sri Ramakrishna and opened up opportunities which led to an early acquaintance with him.

Baburam chanced to see Sri Ramakrishna for the first time in a Hari Sabha at Jorasanko, where the latter went to hear the chanting of the Bhagavata, though he scarcely knew

then that he had met Sri Ramakrishna. He also heard about the Master from his elder brother. The latter told him about a monk at Dakshineswar, who, like Sri Gouranga, lost all consciousness of the world while uttering the name of God. On being asked if he would like to see the Sadhu, he agreed. Baburam knew that Rakhal was in the habit of visiting Dakshineswar frequently. Next day he asked his friend about the saint, and it was settled that on the following Saturday they should go together to see him. On the appointed day, after the school hours, they set out by a boat and were joined on the way by a friend named Ramdayal Chakravarti, who also used to visit Ramakrishna. Rakhal enquired of Baburam if he would like to stay for the night. Baburam thought that they were going to a monk who lived in a hut, and replied, 'Will there be accommodation for us?' Rakhal only said, 'There may be.' The question of food troubled Baburam, and he asked, 'What shall we eat at night?' Rakhal simply said, 'We shall manage somehow.'

At sunset they reached the temple of Dakshineswar. Baburam was fascinated with the beauty of the place, which looked like a fairyland. They entered Sri Ramakrishna's room, but he was not there. Rakhal asked them to wait and hurried to the temple. In a few minutes he was seen leading Ramakrishna by the hand. The Master was in a state of God-intoxication, and Rakhal was carefully directing his staggering footsteps, warning him of the high and low places. Reaching his room he sat a while on the small bedstead and presently regained normal consciousness. He enquired about the new comer. Ramdayal introduced Baburam. Sri Ramakrishna said, 'Ah, you are a relative of Balaram! Then

you are related to us also. What is your native place?’

Baburam : Antpur, sir.

Sri Ramakrishna : Ah, then I must have visited it. Kali and Bhulu of Jhamapukur also hail from that place, don't they?

Baburam : Yes, sir. But how do you know them?

Sri Ramakrishna : Why, they are sons of Ramaprasad Mitra. When I was at Jhamapukur, I used to go frequently to their house as well as to that of Digambar Mitra.

Saying this Sri Ramakrishna caught hold of Baburam's hand and said, 'Come closer to the light. Let me see your face.' In the dim light of an earthen lamp he carefully scrutinized his features. Satisfied with the results of the examination, he nodded his head in approbation. Next he examined the boy's arms and legs. Finally he said, 'Let me see your palm.' He looked at it and placed it upon his own as if to weigh it. Then he said, 'All right, all right.' Turning to Ramdayal he said, 'Do you know how Naren is? I heard that he was a bit indisposed.'

Ramdayal : I hear that he is well.

Sri Ramakrishna : He has not come here for a long time, and I feel a great longing to see him. Will you ask him to come here one day? You won't forget it?

Ramdayal : I shall ask him positively.

The night advanced. It was about ten o'clock. Ramdayal had brought a large quantity of food for Sri Ramakrishna who took only a part of it, arranging the rest to be distributed among the three devotees. Then Sri Ramakrishna asked them where they preferred to sleep,—in his room or outside. Rakhal chose inside, but Baburam thought that his presence might disturb the meditation of the

saint. So he and Ramdayal preferred to sleep outside, though Sri Ramakrishna invited them to remain within.

The two devotees had already fallen asleep when they were roused by the cry of guards. Presently Sri Ramakrishna approached them reeling like a drunkard with his cloth under his arms. Addressing Ramdayal he said, 'Hallo, are you asleep?' 'No, sir,' was the reply. Then Sri Ramakrishna said with great eagerness, 'Please tell him to come. I felt as if somebody were wringing my heart like this,'—and he twisted his cloth. His every word and gesture expressed the unspeakable agony of heart at the separation from Narendranath. 'What love!' thought Baburam, 'But how queer that he does not respond?' Sri Ramakrishna proceeded a few steps towards his room. Then he returned and said to Ramdayal, 'Then don't forget to tell him about it.' He repeated these words and went back to his bed with staggering gait. About an hour after, he appeared again and unburdened his mind to Ramdayal, 'Look here, he is very pure. I look upon him as the manifestation of Narayana, and can't live without him. His absence is wringing my heart like this,' and he again twisted his cloth. Then he said in bitter anguish, 'I am being put on the rack, as it were, for his sake. Let him come here just once.' The scene was repeated at hourly intervals throughout the night.

When Baburam met Sri Ramakrishna next morning, he found him quite a different man. His face was calm like a sea after the storm, no anxiety lined his face. He asked Baburam to go round the Panchavati.

As he advanced towards the spot a strange sight greeted his eyes. The place looked so familiar and known. We know how his boyish imagination

used to conjure up the vision of a hermit's life in future in a secluded spot shut out from the public gaze by a wall of trees. What was his astonishment when he found that Panchavati tallied exactly with the dreams of his boyhood! How could he have foreshadowed the picture so accurately? He, however, kept this to himself and returned to Sri Ramakrishna. In response to a question as to how he liked the place, he only said it was nice. The Master then asked him to visit the Kali Temple, which he did. When he took leave of Sri Ramakrishna, the latter affectionately asked him to come again.

The visit left a deep impression on Baburam's mind. 'He is an exceptionally good man,' he thought, 'and dearly loves Naren. But strange that Naren does not go to see him.' The next Sunday at eight o'clock he again came to Dakshineswar. A few devotees were seated before the Master. Sri Ramakrishna welcomed him and said, 'It is nice that you have come. Go to the Panchavati, where they are having a picnic. And Narendra has come. Have a talk with him.' At the Panchavati Baburam found Rakhal, who introduced him to Narendra and some other young devotees of the Master, who had assembled there. From the first Baburam was filled with admiration for Narendra. To look at him was to love him. Narendra was talking with his friends. Presently he burst into a song, which charmed Baburam. With bated breath he listened saying to himself, 'Ah, how versatile he is!' In this way the Master helped the future bearers of his message to be bound by the intimate ties of love and affection.

This became the prelude to a closer association with Ramakrishna, whose great love and purity and holiness drew Baburam nearer and nearer to him as

days went on. Slowly the knowledge began to dawn on Baburam that his relation with him was not of this life alone, but dated from a remote existence. In the personality of Sri Ramakrishna he discovered the realization of the highest ideals of life, whose vague contours fled across his mind in the dreams and phantasies of his boyhood. The indistinct promptings of the young heart were clearly articulated in Sri Ramakrishna. Before long, he surrendered himself at his feet for ever. The Master took the young disciple under the wings of his motherly care and began to teach the young fledgling in a thousand ways to soar to the heights of spiritual realization.

Baburam was just twenty when he met Sri Ramakrishna, though he appeared to be much younger and very handsome. His character was untouched by the least blemish of the world. Indeed to the end of his days he maintained a childlike innocence and was unaware of the common erring ways of humanity. Sri Ramakrishna held him very high in his estimation. He divined his absolute purity and classed him among the *Nitya Siddhas* and the *Ishwarakotis*. In a vision he saw Baburam as a goddess with a necklace. This gave him an inkling as to the personality of this disciple. 'It is a new vessel, and milk can be put into it without fear of turning,'—this was what he used to say of the boy. He would also say, 'Baburam is pure to his very marrow. No impure thought can ever cross his mind and body.'

Owing to his absolute purity Baburam was deemed a fit attendant for Sri Ramakrishna, who liked to have him about. The inner group of disciples of Sri Ramakrishna began to come from 1881; from that time onward they began to take personal care of Sri Ramakrishna. Among them Rakhal

and Latu attended on him continuously for a fairly long period. After a time Rakhal had to be away occasionally, so Sri Ramakrishna felt sometimes a difficulty with regard to his personal care. There were others no doubt, but the Master could not bear the touch of all in all his moods. So one day he said to Baburam, 'In this my condition, I cannot bear the touch of all. You stop here,—then it will be very good.' Baburam began to stay there now and then, though he did not dare to do so permanently expecting trouble from home.

Closer association with the Master drove Baburam's mind inwards. The studies became insipid to him, and he began to neglect them. About 1883 or 1884 he appeared in the Entrance Examination and failed to get through. When Sri Ramakrishna heard about it he said, 'So much the better; he has been released from bonds,' playing a pun on the Bengali expression which sounds like the English word 'pass' and means bondage. Baburam heaved a sigh of relief on hearing this.

The Master did not fail to notice that Baburam was neglecting his studies. To test the boy's mind he asked him one day, 'Where are your books? Do you not mean to continue your studies?' And then turning to Mahendra Nath Gupta, who was present, he said, 'He wants to have both,' and added, 'very difficult is the path. What will a little knowledge avail? Just imagine Vashishtha being seized with grief at the loss of his son! Lakshmana was amazed at it and asked Rama the reason. Rama replied, "Brother, there is nothing to wonder at it. Whoever has knowledge has also ignorance. May you go beyond both." ' 'I want just that,' Baburam smilingly replied. Sri Ramakrishna said, 'Well, is it possible to have that if you stick to both? If you want that then

come away.' Still smiling Baburam replied, 'You please draw me out.'

The Master no doubt wanted that Baburam should stay with him permanently. But he perceived that there might be trouble if he insisted on Baburam's doing so, so he passed by the topic saying, 'You are weak-minded. You lack boldness. Just see how junior Naren says—"I shall stay here and shall never go back." ' However, Sri Ramakrishna's desire to have Baburam with him always and thus to fashion his character came to be fulfilled a few days later in the following way. Baburam's mother had already become a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna. One day as she came to see Sri Ramakrishna, the latter requested her to leave her son with him. The mother was rather pleased and gave her ungrudging consent. She only asked that she might have devotion to God and that she might never live to suffer the bereavement of her children. Her desires were fulfilled. From this time on Baburam began to live with the Master constantly. Sri Ramakrishna used to call him his *Daradi* i.e. the companion of his soul; so great was the love the Master bore towards him.

In later years Swami Premananda would often recount with tenderness the Master's great love for him. 'Do I love you?' He would say addressing the young monks of the Math, 'No, if I had I would have bound you for ever to me. Oh, how dearly the Master loved us! We do not even bear a hundredth of that love towards you. When I would fall asleep while fanning him at night, he would take me inside his mosquito net and make me sleep on his bed. When I would remonstrate with him saying that it would be sacrilegious for me to use his bed, he would reply, "Outside mosquitos will bite you. I shall wake you up when necessary." '

The Master would often come to Calcutta to see Baburam and feed him with his own hands sweets which he had brought from Dakshineswar. And often the intensity of the Master's affection made him cry out like a child when Baburam was away from him in Calcutta.

Sri Ramakrishna's love and sweet words began to mould the pliant soul of the young disciple. His life was the greatest teacher of all, and he taught in strange ways. One night Baburam was sleeping in the Master's room. After some time he was awakened by the sound of the Master's steps. Opening his eyes he found Sri Ramakrishna pacing up and down the room in a state of trance with his cloth under his arms. A feeling of deep abhorrence was written in his features. With a face flushed with emotion, the Master was repeating vehemently, 'Away with it! Away with it!' and praying, 'O Mother, don't give me fame, O don't Mother!' It appeared to the boy as if the Divine Mother was following Sri Ramakrishna with a quantity of fame in order to make a present of it to him and that Sri Ramakrishna was remonstrating with her. The incident impressed the boy so profoundly that he conceived an uttermost hatred for fame for life.

The holy life of Sri Ramakrishna sharpened the boy's appetite for religious experiences. In Sri Ramakrishna's company he noticed that many went into ecstasies while hearing devotional songs, and he felt sad that he was denied such experiences. He pressed Sri Ramakrishna so that he might also enjoy such states. At his importunities the Master prayed to the Divine Mother for his sake, but was told that Baburam would have knowledge (Jnana) instead of Bhava (ecstasies). This delighted the Master.

One day Hazra* in his characteristic way was advising Baburam and some other young boys to ask of Sri Ramakrishna something tangible in the shape of powers, instead of, as was their wont, merely living a jolly life with him with plenty of good things to eat. Sri Ramakrishna, who was near, scented mischief-making, and calling Baburam to his side said, 'Well, what can you ask? Isn't everything that I have yours already? Yes, everything I have earned in the shape of realizations is for the sake of you all. So get rid of the idea of begging, which alienates by creating distance. Rather realize your kinship to me and gain the key to all that treasure.' In a hundred ways like this the Master, like a watchful mother, trained the young souls under his care, so that they might develop without selfishness.

So passed a few happy years. In 1885 Sri Ramakrishna fell a victim to fatal cancer. At the end of the year he was removed to Cossipore garden for facilities of treatment. His protracted illness there, till his passing away in August 1886, laid the foundation of the vast organization that Ramakrishna Mission is to-day. Here assembled the young devotees of the Master to serve him in his illness. Allegiance to the common ideal and devotion to the Master linked them together in the indissoluble bonds of love. For a time after the Master had put aside his vesture of flesh, the disciples were separated from one another. But the distractions of the work-a-day world failed to extinguish the fire of renunciation which was burning in their hearts. In a few months Narendra Nath (Swami Vivekananda), to whom Sri Ramakrishna had entrusted the care of his flock, brought

* Pratapchandra Hazra who used to live at Dakshineswar at that time.

them together in the Baranagore Monastery—an old house, almost in ruins, rented by Surendra Nath Mitra, one of the householder disciples of Sri Ramakrishna.

During the Christmas of 1886 Narendra Nath took the young band to the ancestral place of Baburam at Antpur. Here they spent about a week in holy discourse and intense meditation. The imagination of all took fire at Naren's eloquent portraiture of the glories of a life of renunciation, and they decided to take up the monk's bowl. On returning to Baranagore, Narendra performed an elaborate Virajā Homa and took formal initiation into Sannyasa along with his brother disciples. Narendra gave Baburam the name of Premananda as he thought it conformed to the remark

of Sri Ramakrishna that Sri Radha, the Goddess of Love, herself was partially incarnated in him. Later years were to reveal how apt was this monastic cognomen and what great expanses of love lay hidden in that quiet personality.

At Baranagore, the cradle of the Mission, the little band passed six years of hard austerities. On Swami Ramakrishnananda's departure to Madras to preach the message of the Master there, Swami Premananda took up the duties of the daily worship of the Master. Some time later he left for a pilgrimage in North India and returned on the eve of the removal of the monastery to Belur. Here again he resumed the worship of the Master.

(To be continued)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

We extract the following from the Editorial of the *Social Welfare* of the 28th August, 1941.

'Religious tolerance and the exchange of religious thought and practice had left little trace of religious antagonism between the two sections. Chaitanya had Muslim followers. Kabir was the apostle of Hindu-Muslim unity. The two saints Diyal Bhavan and Jamali Sultan were life-long comrades in religious life and their tombs in the Punjab are still worshipped both by Hindus and Muslims. Bawa Father, a Pir, was the disciple of a Hindu saint. Baba Shahana, a Hindu saint, the founder of a sect, was a *chela* of a Muslim Pir. In Gujerat, the Hindu and Muslim respected each other's shrines and sometimes took vows at them irres-

pective of the faith for which it was reared.'

The saintly mystics of Medieval India were indeed far-sighted statesmen. The so-called statesmen of to-day, who endeavour to maintain their own power by actively creating strife and discord among communities, are bunglers who cannot see beyond their noses.

THE SPIRITUAL VALUES OF LIFE

Sir S. Radhakrishnan speaking on 'The Purpose of Education' made the following observations:

'Education should awaken an individual's soul and enable him to perceive truth in freedom. That is the great ideal of education which has come down to us. There are many who tell us that India should have a particular economic system and that we should fit ourselves to our social environment. Well, im-

portant as these purposes are, we must also possess the power to criticize our environment, to find out what is wrong with it and to build new forms to replace the old if need be. If man is to regard himself merely as a political or economic being, he will go mad. There are certain values which are important, but which are non-existing in our political and economic activities. Each individual must have the power to see visions, to dream dreams, to suffer the anguish of his own failure and to enjoy truth. The purpose of education will be to help us to recognize the reality of those invisible and intangible values which are outside and altogether apart from man's political and economic needs. Man's nature here below is rooted in another and a higher reality, and the meaning of *Upanayana* is to awaken man to the fact that this higher reality exists, and that this has an intimate connection with man's life in the world of space and time. The true purpose of education is to teach that all of us in common have our roots in this higher reality and so are one. The aim of education is not merely to teach citizenship, not to train people to obey the mandates of the State, not to enable men and women to earn their livelihood. Indispensable as all these things are, it is to make us realize that we have certain values which ought to be cherished and nourished, and whatever might happen to civilization or nations, these values which are neither national or international, but truly

universal, will last; and to embody these values in our lives is the true work of education. This country has stood for that ideal of education. If the present distractions are to cease, if we are to lead the rest of the world to a sense of sanity and generosity, it is essential for us to recognize that we are all members of a community different from that which limits us to a particular group alone. That is why I believe that in spite of our political and economic backwardness, this country has a value and a vitality to offer to the whole world; India is still producing men like the Rishis of old, saviours like Buddha. It is such people who are the lords of mankind, and who are, so to say, the typically ideal members of humanity. It is in this country and in this country alone that such men have been born and reborn, men who have incorporated in their lives the true spiritual values of life. That is the value which India has stood for, and I believe not only in the fundamental truth of this value, but I also believe in its social efficiency, not merely for us, but for the whole world.'

In the days of her prosperity, India sent spiritual ambassadors to the nations of the world bearing her message of the higher values of life. In the days of her adversity, she has not ceased sending them. Rabindranath, Vivekananda, Gandhi, Aurobindo and Radhakrishnan are among India's ambassadors of the Spirit. Any nation can be proud of such a galaxy.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

DVĀRAKĀ-PATTALA BY BINABAYI AND **GANGĀ-VĀKYĀVALI** BY VIŠHVASADEVI critically edited for the first time with English Introduction, English Translation of some selected portions, Notes, Appendices, etc. BY PROFESSOR DR. JATINDRA BIMAI CHAUDHURI, Ph.D. (LONDON). Published by the Author from 3, Federation Street, Calcutta. Price Rs. 10/-.

The Dvārakā-pattala and Gangā-vākyāvali have been published by Dr. Chaudhuri in his well-known series—'The Contribution of Women to Sanskrit Literature'—as specimens of women's contribution to the Puranic and the Smṛiti Literature. The Authoresses, Binabayi and Viśhvasadevi, flourished in Gujarat and Tirhut respectively about 500 years ago. Both the works are important contributions to the Religious Literature of India, particularly, dealing as they do with Dvārakā and the Ganges. Further, as they are the works of women, they serve as records of their literary activities in India of that Age. The scientific and scholarly execution of the works by Dr. Chaudhuri who is a finished product of both the Eastern and the Western training in Research work has greatly enhanced their worth. Dr. Chaudhuri's reputation as a leading Oriental scholar and writer is now well established and the present volumes too justify his unqualified success in the field of Oriental Research. Dr. C. O. Blogden rightly remarks in his 'Foreword' that Dr. Chaudhuri must be congratulated for bringing to the notice of the world the literary activities of Indian women. We too heartily congratulate Dr. Chaudhuri for his singularly happy choice in taking up boldly for his Research the Contributions of women to Sanskrit Literature which were hitherto buried in Mss. only and not known to exist at all and particularly for his sound and excellent editing skill. It must be stressed here that Dr. Chaudhuri has traced almost cent per cent quotations, about 2,000 in number, from ninety-nine Sanskrit works, some of which are available only in Mss. In connection with the personal history of the second Authoress, viz. Viśhvasadevi who was a queen of Mithila, he has added a chapter to the History of India in his Appendix V under the title 'The Royal

Family of Mithila' (pp. 109-180). He has further thrown much light upon the literary activities of some of the outstanding Smārtas who are indebted to the authoress of the Gangā-vākyāvali, viz. Mitra Mishra's Raghunandana, Vāchaspati Mishra, etc. (pp. 131-186). The scholarly notes and variant readings appended (pp. 1-96) are most useful to all students of Puranic and Smṛiti Literature who will find Dr. Chaudhuri's Appendix I an inexhaustible source of information for references and other purposes.

In the Sanskrit Texts edited, we seldom come across elaborate Introductions, dealing with the life, date, literary activities of the author, subject-matter of the work, etc., etc., Appendices, Indices and so on; again whereas some editors do not bother about amendments at all, others who do fail to hit at the right point. Very rarely are references traced and variant readings noted. In all these respects Dr. Chaudhuri has set a new standard.

He goes deep into all matters he edits and the result is that the reader finds the Text very easy for him to follow. All the relevant problems are solved, critical portions explained, references found out, wrong readings corrected and very happy amendments suggested, date and literary activities of the author given, and the whole work epitomized for him by the editor.

Similar works are often compared and contrasted and merits and demerits of them all noted by him. The detailed Contents and General Index at the beginning and end of each work of Dr. Chaudhuri at once lend an insight into its subject-matter and intrinsic merit. On the whole, it may be said that the major portion of each of Dr. Chaudhuri's works constitutes most original Research in English and the rest in English and Sanskrit bear throughout stamps of superediting skill. We hope that all future editors will try to conform to the high standard set up by Dr. Chaudhuri. For that alone can awaken genuine interest in Sanskrit Culture and Learning.

SRI KRISHNA. BY M. R. SAMPAT-KUMARAN, M.A. Published by G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Pp. 160. Price 1st 4s.

Sri Krishna is looked upon as God Himself, because His personality in its perfection and versatility towers high above all the other Avatars who have sanctified the soil of India. His life has got a universal appeal that, by transcending the barriers of time and space, has become a perennial source of inspiration to the Indian mind through ages. He represents the different facets of ideal Indian manhood in their completeness. The book under review gives within a short compass an exquisite picture of Sri Krishna 'as the child of innocence and joy, as a youth

of courage and intrepidity, as a warrior and statesman and as a teacher and prophet.' It represents the life and teachings of the great Avatara, as the author says in the preface, by way of an answer to the question: 'What does Sri Krishna mean to us—to us in modern India who are neither saints nor scholars?' So the life has been depicted in its bearing on the needs and problems of modern times and is hoped to be read with interest by all.

Kokileswar Sastri, M.A., Vidyaratna.

NEWS AND REPORTS

PURNA KUMBH MELA—AN APPEAL

Purna Kumbh Mela will be held in Prayag on the Triveni sands in 1942. The first *Snan* (holy bathing) will take place on the 13th January, the next on the 16th January, the third on the 21st January, and the last on 1st February. During this occasion there will be a large concourse of pilgrims. The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Allahabad, has decided to open a camp on the Mela grounds, for an outdoor Charitable Dispensary and first aid, for the purpose of giving medical aid and attention to the assembled pilgrims. Considering the large number of

people who will gather on the occasion from all parts of India, we are making a special appeal to the public to contribute liberally so that we may render this medical assistance on this holy occasion. An expenditure of Rs. 1,500 is estimated for the occasion. Contributions may be kindly sent to—

SWAMI RAGHAVANANDA,
Hony. Secretary.

Ramakrishna Mission
Sevashrama,
Muthiganj, Allahabad.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY, JAMSHEDPUR

The following is a brief report of the work done by the Society during the year 1940.

A regular feature of the religious activities of the Society, during the year, consisted in holding classes both in the Society premises and in different parts of the town every week. Occasional lectures were organized with the object of popularizing the ideas and ideals lived and preached by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. The birthday anniversaries of the Master and many of his disciples were celebrated.

From its very inception the Society has been devoting a considerable portion of its funds and energy to the educational uplift

of the masses. It conducts two Libraries and Free Reading Rooms which are open to the public. There are 5 Primary Schools run by the Society in different parts of the town. The number of students, who received education in these schools during the year was 420. The Students' Home accommodated 9 students, 2 of whom passed the Matriculation Examination of the Patna University.

Patients were nursed in their houses and in the hospital, and dead bodies were cremated whenever required. Firewood was supplied for cremation purposes. Occasional help in cash and kind was given to stranded and indigent people.

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

AT THE HOUSE OF RAJENDRA

Many devotees have come. The Master says at the sight of the assemblage : ‘It is very good that regular prayer is held in the Brahmō Samaj, but one should dive deep. Little can be gained through mere prayer or listening to lectures. One should call on Him in order that one may get rid of one’s attachment to worldly things and acquire pure devotion to His lotus-feet.

‘The elephant has teeth—outside as well as inside. The tusks outside are for beauty, while the teeth inside are required in eating. Similarly, it is harmful for one’s devotion to have hankering for lust and gold in the mind.

‘What does it profit to lecture to people? Vultures may soar high, but their eyes are always fixed on the charnel-pit. A firework shoots up in the sky at first, but the next moment it falls down to the ground.

‘One, who has given up all desires for enjoyment, will think of God alone at the time of death. Otherwise, one cannot but think of such worldly objects as wife, children, home, wealth and honour. A bird repeats the name of Radha-Krishna as a result of long practice, but when caught by a cat it gives out its natural scream.

‘So one should practise unceasingly. One should devote oneself to singing the praise of His name and meditate on Him; one should pray, “Free me from all cravings for enjoyment and bless me that my mind may rest at Thy lotus-feet.”

‘Such people live in the world like a maid-servant who performs all her duties but thinks all the while of her village home. That is to say, they do their works with their mind always fixed on God. It is inevitable that one living a worldly life will be stained with worldliness. But a real devotee lives in

the world like a mud-fish—though living in mud it is not soiled by it.

'Brahman and Shakti are identical. One who adores Him as Mother, gains love and devotion in no time.'

So saying, the Master sings :

Song : 'My mind was hovering like a kite in the firmament of the hallowed feet of Mother Shyâmâ,

When came a foul gust of sin and struck it down to the earth.'

Song : 'O Mother, Yashodâ used to call Thee Nilmani and make Thee dance ;

Where hast Thou, O terrible-looking Mother, hid that form of Thine ?'

The Master has got up on his feet. He dances and sings. The devotees also have stood up.

The Master is going into Samadhi again and again. All look at him with steadfast eyes and stand like statues.

Dr. Dukari puts his fingers on the eyes of the Master to examine what the state of Samadhi is. The devotees are very much annoyed at it.

All resume their seats at the end of this wonderful singing and dancing. Keshab arrives now with a few Brahmo devotees. They bow down to Sri Ramakrishna and take their seats.

Rajendra (to Keshab): 'What a marvellous dance and music we had !'

So saying, *Rajendra* requests *Trailokya* to sing again.

Keshab (to *Rajendra*): 'When the Master has taken his seat, songs will never be so absorbing.'

Songs are going on. *Trailokya* and other Brahmo devotees are singing.

Song :

'O my mind, just take the name of Hari,

And by uttering that name, cross the ocean of Samsara.

In water and land, in the sun and moon, in fire and air, resides Hari; nay, He permeates the whole universe.'

Arrangements are being made on the first floor for feeding Sri Ramakrishna and the devotees. The Master is still sitting in the courtyard, talking to Keshab. He went to a photographic studio at Radhabazar—the topic of conversation is that.

Sri Ramakrishna (to Keshab, with a smile): 'I have seen to-day how a photograph is taken. One thing I marked is that a bare glass does not receive the impression. The impression is caught when the plate is coated with silver nitrate. Likewise, mere listening to discourses on God is of no avail. They are forgotten as soon as they are heard. They leave an impression only when there is a coating of love and devotion on the mind. Otherwise, one listens to them but forgets afterwards.'

The Master has now come to the first floor. He is conducted to a nice carpet seat.

Shyamasundari Devi, the mother of *Manomohan*, is serving the meal. *Manomohan* once said, 'My affectionate mother prostrated herself before the Master and fed him.' Ram and other devotees are present when the Master takes his food.

Keshab and other devotees have sat for meal in the verandah in front of the room in which Sri Ramakrishna is taking food.

Shailaja Charan Chatterjee, the priest of the *Shyamasundara Temple* at *Bechu Chatterjee Street*, is present to-day.

THE ATTAINMENT OF PEACE

BY SWAMI TURIYANANDA

Perfect peace belongs to him alone, 'who lives devoid of longing, abandoning all desires, without the sense of "I" and "mine",' Gita II. 71, and 'As into the ocean—brimful and still—flow the waters, even so the Muni into whom enter all desires, he, and not the desirer of desires, attains to peace.'

The more you succeed in banishing the thoughts of 'I' and 'mine', by installing the Lord in your heart through His grace, the more will you attain peace. There is no exception to this. The more the idea that He is doing everything and that we are puppets in His hand will be mastered through His grace, the more will feelings of 'I' and 'mine' disappear; and rest and peace will come and cool the heart. *Panchadashi* is mainly devoted to Jnâna; so it sets out instructions in regard to meditation on the Unconditioned Self:—But the Lord says in the Gita:—

'Fix thy mind on Me only, place thy intellect in Me: (then) thou shalt no doubt live in Me hereafter.' Gita XII. 8.

'If even a very wicked person worships Me, with devotion to none else, he should be regarded as good, for he has rightly resolved.' Gita IX. 30.

'For, taking refuge in Me, they also O son of Pritha, who might be of inferior birth—women, Vaishyas, as well as Sudras—even they attain to the Supreme Goal.' Gita IX. 32.

Can the Supreme Goal be attained without Samadhi? That Samadhi can be attained without practising the disciplines of the Yoga is mentioned in

the aphorism of the Pâtanjala Yoga-Sutras, which says, 'Samadhi comes by sacrificing all to Isvara.' II. 45. Moreover, this is clear also from the aphorism, 'Or by devotion to Isvara' I. 23. The commentator Vyasa makes the following comment on this aphorism:—'Isvara being drawn towards him by the special kind of devotion becomes gracious to him by merely wishing attainment. By His merely wishing attainment, Samadhi and its fruit become speedier of attainment for the Yogi.' (Pâtanjala Yoga-Sutras, Vyasa Bhashya I. 23). So this is the best proof that Samadhi is possible even without practising the disciplines of Yoga. In this connection the attainment of the Divine Goal by a certain milkmaid on leaving the mortal body, which is described in the tenth chapter of the Bhagavata, is also to be remembered.

'Men, always maintaining feelings of lust, anger, fear, affection, unity and friendliness towards the Lord become one with Him.'

Is there any difference between 'becoming one with Him' and Samadhi? The implication is that attitudes and means are different; otherwise the attainment of the object and its result are the same:

'The plane which is reached by the Jnânins is also reached by the Karma-Yogins. Who sees knowledge and performance of action as one, he sees.' Gita V. 5.

In the twelfth chapter also the Lord, after stating the final truth about meditation with or without form, has clearly pointed out that meditation

with form is easy and pleasant, and should take refuge forsaking so com-
 that He Himself saves the devotee. So passionate a Master, nor any reason for
 I don't see anybody else in whom we doing so.

SONNET SEQUENCE TO SRI RAMAKRISHNA

THE SECOND ECSTASY

(At the age of Eight)

Under the sullen sun at their slow pace
 The women walked, and with them was the child,
 The godly Gadadhar, whose songs beguiled
 Their holy hearts and glorified his face.
 He sang, unmindful of hot dust, the grace
 Of Goddess Vishalakshmi, whom they now,
 As pious pilgrims faithful to a vow,
 Would worship at Anur, Her sacred place.
 Along the road, to clapping hands, he danced,
 Until, struck dumb, he stood there deathly stiff,
 And deaf to all their frightened calls, as if
 The sun had felled him or he was entranced.
 Weeping, the women fanned him but there came
 No life to him until they called Her name.

—DOROTHY KRUGER.

THE THIRD ECSTASY

(At the age of Nine)

His prayer and praise, the first watch of the night,
 So poised the wings of Gadadhar's young soul
 That when they ash-besmeared him for the role
 Of Mahadev, when he was wood-ash white,
 The soul of him flew to the farthest height,
 And in him there was no one to control
 The limbs to walk, the sweet lips to extol
 The glory of Lord Shiva's play of Light.
 And thus upon the stage he came, half led,
 Half borne, majestic, calm, and gravely dumb,
 And village folk who quietly had come
 To laud the play, in awe beheld instead
 The bud unfoldment of an Avatar,
 The Great God dancing in their Gadadhar !

—DOROTHY KRUGER.

INDIAN CULTURE THROUGH THE AGES

Ancient India lives to-day in the secluded hermitages scattered over the Himalayas especially near the sources of the sacred rivers, the Ganges and the Jumna. All over the country, in the assemblies of learned pandits and in all places where the young are instructed in the sacred lore and are trained to chant those melodious Vedic hymns that laid the foundations of Aryan culture, the echoes of the past approach our ears reverberating through distant vistas of time. The Taj Mahal and other mausoleums, ancient temples that have withstood the ravages of time, the palaces of Rajahs and other sacred and secular buildings of the past reveal to us some glimpses of the 'gorgeous East' that roused the envy and the cupidity of other nations. The glory that was Medieval India is also faintly reflected in the pageantry associated with temple festivals and religious fairs throughout the length and breadth of the country from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and from Dwarka to Jagannath Puri. Side by side with the ancient and the medieval we have our modern cities, quite as crowded as their prototypes of the West, dotted here and there with smoking chimneys brightened up with commercial advertisements and provided with cinema-halls and other cheap forms of entertainment, the mingled noises of which get drowned in the din of traffic of the bustling streets. Slum dwellings and the pavements that provide some sleeping accommodation to homeless vagrants are as much a feature of Indian cities as of other cities in other parts of the world.

* * *

A unique characteristic of Indian civilization is that time does not erase

out the past. Not only the spirit of ancient times but the very forms in which that spirit expressed itself have been carefully preserved by succeeding generations. It is not so in other countries and among other nations. The pyramids of Egypt, the Parthenon of Greece and the Colosseum of Rome may testify to the past splendour of those countries, Greek philosophy and Roman laws may be found metamorphosed in the philosophies and legal systems of Modern Europe, but the descendants of the Greeks and Romans do not wear the toga and the tunic and the gods worshipped by the ancestors do not receive the homage of the descendants. In India, on the other hand, we meet with a large variety of living types bearing the genuine impress of the distant past even to the smallest detail. If we visit the west coast of South India, we may meet to-day the Nambudiri Brahmin belonging to the caste that gave birth to the great philosopher Shankaracharya, discussing the same Advaita philosophy and living in much the same manner as his ancestors did in the days of Shankara. In Delhi and in other cities of the north we can come across descendants of the Moghuls, with sleek paunches and dignified gait, pacing the streets unconcerned about the hooting of automobiles and the busy traffic around. Up in the Himalayas we can meet with monks belonging to the oldest monastic order in the world, living very much like their forbears who retired to the Himalayan forests centuries ago. In South India we meet with men of the Dravidian race, whose ancestors, the historians tell us, carried the seeds of civilization to distant countries and

were known as Sumerians, Hittites, Phoenicians, Minoans, Etruscans, Egyptians, Numidians, Bereberians, Iberians, and Druids.* Walking in the streets of London, if we were to be accosted by a brown-skinned, black-haired Druid, in his quaint costume, we will certainly consider the experience as something eerie, something supernatural. But in the streets of South India we can meet with the cousins of the Druids unchanged by the passage of centuries. The Minoans and the Etruscans became merged in the Greeks and the Romans but the Dravidians in India have persisted as a distinct racial type. The Kolarians who peopled this country even before the Dravidians are yet to be found living in their primitive simplicity.

* * *

In an unthinking moment some Western scholar has floated the rumour that Indians have no historic sense. The imputation has persisted because 'scientific' histories written in the modern style for propaganda purposes are not found among the literary records left by the ancestors of the Indians. This does not mean that glorious deeds and movements of peoples, wars and conquests and the fortunes of dynasties have been left unrecorded in the literatures of India. These as well as the rise and fall of religious movements, the joys and sorrows of common people and such other material for history are amply recorded in the Sanskrit, the Prakrit and the vernacular literatures of India. They are also found in copper-plate grants and stone edicts and the material available is so large in extent that the

student of history finds it difficult to cope with it. Besides these, as we have already pointed out, the ethnic and cultural types of the past have not been obliterated. The student can see the types and study them at first-hand. The cultural history of India is, as it were, an open book, the pages of which are vibrant with life. Indian civilization has succeeded in harmonizing diverse racial and cultural elements and producing an organic whole without destroying the individuality of the parts. Nothing of value has been allowed to fade away. The beauty of each part has been fully recognized and preserved and the sages have found it possible to combine them into a whole of inestimable value. The Indian conception of Dharma will help us to understand the wisdom of the nation-builders of India. 'Better is one's own Dharma (though) imperfect, than the Dharma of another well performed,' says the Gita, thus recognizing the diversity of human nature and the necessary corollary of difference in self-expression. The supreme purpose of each individual life may be conceived as the highest self-expression possible to it. We are reminded of the quarrel between the mountain and the squirrel. Both have their place in the grand scheme of things. If we merely stop at the outposts only observing the diversity, we are apt to mistake the trees for the forest and the pigments for the picture. We have to go further and comprehend the unity amidst the diversity. The Dharma of individuals differ, no doubt. But all Dharma point to the same ideal and lead to the same end. The paths are many but they lead to the same goal. We shall proceed to see briefly how this unity was practically achieved and why the diversity of types was carefully preserved and maintained.

* Vide 'The Hamitic Indo-Mediterranean Race' by Fr. H. Heras in the *New Review of Calcutta*, September, 1941, also Ragozin, *Vedic India*, A. C. Das, *Rig-Vedic India* and H. R. Hall, *The Ancient History of the Near East*.

We shall begin by making a rapid survey of the outstanding achievements of Ancient India. The Vedas which form the earliest extant literary record of the human race are among the proud possessions of the people of Hindusthan. To the Hindus they form the fountain-head of the religion they profess, but to all Indians they constitute the storehouse of Aryan culture. The Upanishadic sages of India inquired into the eternal verities of existence long before philosophers and thinkers rose among other nations. Their brilliant intuitions provided the material for subsequent thinkers. The artisans of Mohen-jo Daro planned cities and erected brick buildings about the time of Noah's deluge. Very probably the art of making wheeled vehicles also originated with them. They also studied astronomy and music. We are told that the astronomers of Mohen-jo Daro named the constellation Gemini by the Tamil word for harp and represented it by the symbol of the harp. The two great epics of India, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, from the time of their composition, have been exerting a living influence upon Indian civilization. The ideals of life and character held up by the epics are universal, and when Indian civilization spread out in Medieval times, it was the epics that formed the connecting link between the mother country and her colonies. The epics are also encyclopaedic in scope and contain much information concerning the arts and the sciences known to the ancients. From the earliest times we see the Aryan mind engaging itself pre-eminently in intellectual pursuits and evolving the sublime teachings of monistic philosophy, which forms the cream of Aryan thought. The Dravidians on the other hand have been busy constructing roads and cities and building ships which carried the

merchandise of the country (millenniums before Christ) to distant lands in the West and in later times to the islands of the East Indian Archipelago. Loyalty to a personal God appears to be the key-note of Dravidian thought. The mutual interaction between these two types may be traced from the dawn of history to the present day. This interaction has been fruitful and creative. It has resulted in the development of a complete and virile culture which throughout subsequent ages has shown its capacity to receive and assimilate cultural influences from abroad without in the least endangering its own cherished ideals.

* * *

The culture that resulted by the contact of the ancient Aryans and Dravidians is the common Indian culture which has become enriched subsequently by the influx of alien elements. But as we have already remarked, its permanent ideals have not suffered any appreciable change. Vedic thought forms the intellectual foundation of this culture. To us in India Aryan and Vedic are interchangeable terms. 'We stick, in spite of Western theories, to that definition of the word "Arya," which we find in our sacred books, and which includes only the multitude we now call Hindus' (Swami Vivekananda). The Nordic races of Europe who speak languages connected with Sanskrit are the descendants of ancestors who worshipped Odin and Thor and other strange blood-thirsty gods. If there is also ethnic affinity between the ancient Aryans of India and the ancestors of the Nordic races, the separation of the two groups must have taken place before the time of composition of the Vedas. To the student of cultural history Aryan culture means the way of life based upon the teachings of the Vedas. In

this restricted sense those alone can claim to be Aryans, who accept the authority of the Vedas; others are outside the pale. Sanskrit was and continues to be the common medium of cultural intercourse for all India, even as Latin was the common language of the intellectuals of Medieval Europe. The Roman Catholic clergy were the custodians of culture of Medieval Europe and Latin became the language of the Church and, therefore, a holy language. Similarly Sanskrit acquired a sacred character in India. With the exception of Tamil, the vernacular literatures of India developed in comparatively recent times. Not only religious and philosophical treatises but also poetical compositions and technical treatises were written in Sanskrit even after the Moghul invasion of India. Study of Sanskrit and the acceptance of the authority of the Vedas brought individuals and groups within the Aryan fold and the process has been going on through the ages down to the present time. Acceptance of the authority of the Vedas meant acceptance of the authority of priests who were the custodians of the Vedas. There have been revolts in the past against the priests and 'protestant' sects sprang up as a result of such revolts. These sects, however, did not break themselves away from the common cultural life. The old Aryan gods were there, but the prophet who inspired the new sect was elevated above the old gods.

* * *

'Self-abnegation and harmony were the key-notes of the spiritual life of the Vedic sages. In fact, this spirit of sacrifice, restraint and harmony through love, and the desire for the attainment of immortality in life, came to be the dominant factors of the cultural life of the Indo-Aryans from the earliest

days of the Rig-Veda. No one can understand the full significance of the spiritual culture of India, both ancient and modern, unless he keeps in view these predominant trends of the inner thought life of the land. *One in the many, unity in variety*, harmony and not discord, is the perennial message of Vedic India' (Swami Sharvananda in *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. I). We now realize the spirit that inspired the Vedic sages to preserve intact the forms developed by the Dravidians and other races whom they assimilated and Aryanized. The ideal that they set before themselves and others who came within their fold was spiritual, it aimed at the progressive development of the spiritual life until the consummation of God-realization and the attainment of immortality were achieved. From the earliest times the sages endeavoured to discover unity amidst diversity. Unity should not be confused with uniformity. The means adopted for the securing of unity were non-violent means. For the sages took their stand upon the lofty pinnacles of Truth which leads to Justice, Freedom and respect for human personality. They were never in a hurry, they perfected the means and gave the aspirants the necessary freedom for growth. We who are witnessing the work of totalitarian regimes overhauling the social order by violent legislation cannot fully appreciate the spirit behind the nation-building activities of the Vedic sages. Nevertheless we can be convinced of the stability of the foundation on which they built. We should, however, admit the fact that there were revolts against the order set up by the ancient seers. It behoves us to seek for the causes of revolt. Swami Vivekananda in his *Modern India* (Complete Works, Vol. IV) admirably analyses the causes of the social revolt

pointing out that the conflict was between priestly power and royal power. The rivalry between Vishwamitra and Vasishtha foreshadows this conflict. The rituals detailed in the Vedas could only be performed by hereditary priests but the supreme knowledge of Brahman, as mentioned in the Upanishads, was also in the possession of the Kshatriyas. Emphasis on the superiority of the knowledge aspect is bound to rob priests of the privileges enjoyed by them. The Jaina and the Buddha revolts took up their stand on Dharma conceived as righteousness and the moral discipline that led to it. They decried Vedic sacrifices, particularly those associated with the shedding of blood.

* * *

Rishabha-deva, the earliest Jain teacher, belongs to the remote past. Neminatha, a contemporary of Sri Krishna, is recognized as the twenty-second Tirthankara, and Parswanatha as the twenty-third, Vardhamana Mahavira the twenty-fourth and the last of the Tirthankaras was, according to Jaina tradition, born in a royal family in the year 599 B.C. Gautama Shakyamuni, the Buddha, was also born in a royal family. Scholars place his date of birth in the year 567 B.C. Both these royal prophets have profoundly influenced the cultural history of India. Both denied the authority of the Vedas, the efficacy of Vedic rituals and the exclusive privileges of Aryan priests. But paradoxically, by their democratic teachings they spread the culture of the Aryans among other races and have been instrumental in Aryanizing not only the whole of India but also countries beyond the border. The first wave of Aryanization spread southwards with the sage Agastya and his followers. This happened in the remote past. One of the early Pandya

kings bore the honorific title 'Pal-Yaga-Sâlai,' 'of many sacrificial halls' and another Chola king bore the name 'Râjasûyam-vêtta,' 'he who performed the Rajasuya sacrifice.' This first wave did not very much affect the language and the customs of the Tamils. The second wave went with the Jain monks, who had the patronage of the great emperor, Chandragupta Maurya and the third with the Buddhist monks, who enjoyed the patronage of Asoka, beloved of the gods, the grandson of Chandragupta. Kanchi became a cultural centre of the Buddhists and Madura of the Jains and the Brahmins. All these took place from the third century B.C. Subsequently from the third to the ninth century A.D., under the patronage of the Pallavas, the process of Aryanization was very rapid. As we have already mentioned the monks and the priests who were the agents of the cultural transformation carried on their work by non-violent means. Similar waves of Aryanization spread to lands beyond the seas: Malay peninsula, Ceylon, Java, Siam, Indo-China and China and also to lands to the north-west and beyond the Himalayas. This cultural conquest was a conquest of the heart, carried out unostentatiously with no flourish of trumpets.

* * *

Sankhya and Yoga, Nyaya and Vaiseshika, Mimamsa and Vedanta grew and developed from the undefined philosophical speculations of the Vedas and the Upanishads. The Buddhists and the Jains gave an impetus to secular literature also. Not only Sanskrit and Prakrit, but in South India, Tamil also received the attention of the monks. The fine arts and the sciences were also developed. The modern man, both in the East and in the West, attempts to decry the monastic orders.

In doing so, he forgets the valuable contribution which the cloistered monk has made to the cultural heritage of the world. All over the world, the monk has been the pioneer of education. Nalanda and Takshasila, Kanchi and Madura, Vikramasila and Sravana Ballagola as also Sridhanya Kataka at Amaravati have been the centres from which monastic and lay teachers spread the light of sacred and secular learning amidst eager students who flocked to them. Mithila and Benares, and the forest-universities in the Himalayas preceded these as the centres of Brahminical learning. The caves of Ajanta and Sittannavasal in the South testify to posterity the artistic abilities of the medieval monks. Nagarjuna's name is associated with early chemistry and medicine. Dignaga carried the logical theories developed in the South to far off China. When learning was in the hands of monks, it performed its legitimate function of refining the mind of the student making it a fit receptacle for receiving the highest wisdom.

* * *

Non-violence and pacifism are certainly the ornaments of the monk and the scholar, for learning and quiet contemplation can be fostered only in a peaceful atmosphere. But the Dharma of Kshatriyas and warriors is different. It is their duty to engage themselves in righteous warfare. The Aryan doctrine on this point is unambiguously expounded by the greatest teacher of Hindusthan, the divine author of the Bhagavad-Gita. King Akhenaten of Egypt and our own beloved Asoka were indeed two of the finest flowers of the human race. They idealized kingship and endeavoured their best to alleviate the sufferings of all fellow-beings. Even animals had their loving protection. When these god-like kings sat on the throne all was well, for their

character had the beneficent influence of subduing the forces of evil. But the aftermath of the rule of these philosopher-kings brought in confusion and disaster. Let us trace the story in India and see how the pacifist policy of Asoka produced its inevitable results. Bactrian Greeks, Parthians, Sakas and Kushanas pounced upon the country in succession like hungry vultures upon a dead carcase and the people who had lost the power to resist, because of their pacifism under the benign Asoka, were robbed, plundered, massacred and enslaved. After about five centuries of confusion the true Kshatriya Dharma of Aryan polity reasserted itself and the Guptas rose to power and built a mighty empire. The Hindu renaissance under the Imperial Guptas assimilated the best elements in Buddhism and the arts and sciences cultivated by Buddhist monks. In the South the Pallava kings and later on the Imperial Cholas became ardent patrons of nascent Hinduism and helped in the creating of a virile, conquering culture. The Puranas arose in this period popularizing the philosophical doctrines of the previous epochs and consequently the period may be referred to as the Pauranic age. It extended from the third to the eleventh centuries. One of the great achievements of this age was the Aryanization and Hinduization of many who came to this country from outside.

* * *

Sanskrit poetry and drama flourished under the patronage of Hindu sovereigns. Kalidasa, whose immortal *Shakuntala* first attracted the attention of the Western world to the rich treasures of Sanskrit literature, Varahamihira, the astronomer, Dhanvantari, the physician, and six other remarkable scholars are referred to as the nine gems that adorned the court of Vikra-

maditya alias Chandragupta II, whose date is fixed by scholars in the early part of the fifth century A.D. From the earliest times, in addition to language, literature, philosophy, religion and the fine arts, Indian thinkers have been developing mathematics, astronomy, the physical and the biological sciences and medicine. Islam which carried learning to the West has in the opinion of scholars, acted as a purveyor not only of the intellectual fare provided by Greek thought but also of the store given by Indian thought. The colourful pageantry associated with the 'gorgeous East' was also fully developed during this age. It, of course, began in the Buddhist age when beautiful temples and brilliant festivals took the place of the austere simplicity of the Vedic sacrificial halls. The story of the progress of Indian culture from the eleventh to the eighteenth centuries has been briefly told by us in a previous issue, under the caption, 'Religious Revival in Medieval India.'

We come to modern times. The first impact with the West gave a shock that blurred the vision of India. There was a tendency to reject old values and seek new ones. But this was only a transitory phase. For India soon realized that imitation could never lead to a vigorous national life. On the other hand it would lead to decay and death and the end of all creativity. Further she realized that the ancient wisdom, based upon the light of the spirit, had a permanent value for all time. All leading thinkers of Modern India from Raja Ram Mohan Roy downwards took the country back to the Vedas and the Upanishads, the perennial source of Indian thought. The renaissance in India found its fulfilment in the lives and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. The Master

realized the underlying harmony of all religions, the dignity of human personality and its essential divinity. He stressed the need for freedom in religion and gave a new turn to social service by pointing out that it was a privilege to serve Narayana in the poor and the distressed. He emphasized practical realization and showed that true values were to be found not in mere knowing but in being and becoming. The seeds sown by the Master fell on fertile ground. The chief disciple in his numerous speeches and writings expounds these teachings and in doing so gives a new commentary to the Upanishads and the Gita. While not rejecting anything of value from the old, the new interpretation adds immeasurably to the ancient wisdom and makes it a way of life both to the active man of affairs and the contemplative religious aspirant. We are too close to the source to comprehend the full significance of the new teaching.

* * *

Reality is said to reveal Itself in the triune aspects of Truth, Beauty and Goodness. There is also a fourth aspect, the aspect of Power, not the power that enslaves but the power that emancipates. The earliest thinkers emphasized Truth. With the tool of unrelenting logic they sought to annihilate the veil of ignorance and succeeded in producing the sublime system of thought known as the Advaita philosophy. The Jains and the Buddhists laid emphasis on the aspect of Goodness and the moral discipline that led to it. The dualistic and qualified non-dualistic thinkers of Medieval India stressed the aspect of Beauty and promulgated the gospel of loving devotion to a personal god, the source of all beauty. The new interpretation accepts all the above and goes a step further by laying emphasis upon the aspect of Power. The pro-

phet of the new age sums up his message in the one word 'Strength.' With a trumpet voice he calls upon the weak, the miserable, and the down-trodden of all races, all creeds and all sects to stand on their feet and be free. Freedom, he tells us, is the watchword of the Upanishads, physical freedom, mental freedom and above all spiritual freedom. 'Come up, oh lions, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep ; you are souls immortal, spirits free, blest and eternal ; ye are not matter, ye are not bodies ; matter is

your servant, not you the servant of matter,' thunders out this inspired seer. India has heard his clarion call and is preparing herself once again for world-conquest. The savants of India have assimilated all that is good in the new learning of the West. They have made permanent contributions to the world's store of ideas and are busy working out a dynamic Indian culture which has already begun to influence the nations of the world.

MAYAVATT,
14 October 1941.

THE POETIC APPROACH TO THE DIVINE IN THE VEDAS

By DR. A. C. BOSE, M.A., Ph.D.

'They have called Him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni. He is the divine Suparna, He is Garutman. The learned speak of the One in many ways, as they name Him Agni, Yama, Matarishwan' (Rigveda 1.164.46).

The freedom of expressing the One in many ways makes a poetic approach to the divine possible. For poetry is the record of visions of reality and only multiplicity and variety can give a scope to visions. Without distinction there can be no form. In monotony there is no art. A single abstract concept will satisfy the metaphysical mind but provide poor material for poetry. A multiplicity of visions as the content of experience, a multiplicity of beautiful forms as the mode of recording them : these are what the poet has to deal with. Abstract thinking loses its hold on his mind, metaphysics recedes to the background ; his spirit glories in a thrilling awareness of the highest reality in experience and builds noble images

in language to preserve it in the most vital form possible.

Such indeed is the impression left by the Vedic hymns. They are far from metrical versions of preconceived ideas. They do not derive their significance from philosophical assumptions. They are as spontaneous utterances as any poetry can be of what was deepest and intensest in the souls of the seers. They record the exquisite astonishment before the wonder that is the divine.

'He is the greatest of all wonders heard of,' says the Rigveda about the Deity (I. 1.5). 'There is no equal to Him whose name is great Glory,' says the Yajurveda (Chap. 82.3). 'No one has been born, nor will be born, like Thee,' says another verse in the Rigveda (I. 81.5).

The divine has been described in different terms of splendour throughout the Vedas. Fresh names with new variety have been used in the succeeding books. Where the Yajurveda gives a list of typical names for the divine,

all except one name are new as compared to the above-quoted verse from the Rigveda:

'That is Agni, That is Aditya, That is Vayu, That is Chandramas, That is Sukra, That is Brahman, That is Apas, That is Prajâpati (Lord of Creation)' (Ch. 82.1).

But this is not the only type of variety in terms of which the divine has been envisaged. It has been contemplated in different relations to man and the universe.

To the Vedic seer God the Creator is Himself a Poet! The universe is His Poem. So says the Atharvaveda:

'Behold the poem of God! It has not died, nor does it grow old' (X.8.32).¹

The term 'kavi', poet-creator, has very frequently been applied to the Deity. He has been called 'the Poet of poets'² (Rig. II. 23.1), 'the wisest of poets'³ (Rig. X. 112.9). 'Thou art a poet and hast known the universe through poetry,' says another verse in the Rigveda (X. 91.3).

One of the essential traits of poetry is found in the delicate human touches. Various types of imagery have been used in the Vedas to describe the affectionate relationship between the divine and the human. Though the divine is variously named as Agni, Indra etc., the relationship is understood to be the same.

The Deity has been described 'as a kinsman to a kinsman, as a friend to a friend' (Rig. I. 26.3). He is 'dear as a friend'⁴ (Rig. VIII. 84.1) an epithet reproduced in the Samaveda (e.g. I. 1.5). It becomes more intimate in 'dear Friend'⁵ (Samaveda I. 4.1); even more

graceful in 'a youthful friend'⁶ (Rig. VIII. 45.1). 'We worship Thee,' says the Yajurveda, 'the beloved Lord among the beloved' (Ch. 23.19). He is as 'the lover of maidens, the husband of wives' (Rig. I. 66.4).

He is spoken of in terms of tender family relationship. He is 'like the father to the son' (Rig. I. 1.9). 'When will you take us, O loving One, as the father takes his son by both hands?' asks the seer in the Rigveda (I. 88.1). 'He is our Father, our Progenitor, our Providence,' says the Rigveda (X. 82.3). The Yajurveda gives a variant of it in 'He is our Friend, our Progenitor, our Providence' (32.10). In Atharvaveda it is, 'He is our Father, Progenitor, Friend' (II.1.3). 'Thou art our Father, our Brother, our Friend,' says a verse in Samaveda (II. 9.2.11). 'He diffuses happiness like a son,' says another verse in the Rigveda (I. 89.10).

The female idea of the divinity has also been well developed. The Rigveda speaks of the Mother who has borne the universe (VI. 50.7). She feeds up with divine wisdom as the mother her babe with breast milk (Rig. I. 164.49). '(In purity) the Deity resembles an irreproachable and beloved wife' (Rig. I. 73.3). 'He is an ornament to all like a woman in a dwelling' (Rig. I. 68.3).

The Rigveda calls the divine in one verse as Father, as Mother, as Son (I. 89.10). Elsewhere He is described as 'the Fatherliest of Fathers' (pitritama pitrinâm, Rig. IV. 17.17); 'the Motherliest' (mâtiritamâ) (Rig. VI. 50.7); 'the Manliest of Men' (nritama nrinâm, Rig. I. 77.4).

More poetic still is the idea of the Deity as a guest. In the Aryan household the guest occupied a particularly honourable position. He was an object

¹ Devasya pashya kâvyam na mamâra na jîryati.

² Kavim kavinâm.

³ Vipratamam kavinâm.

⁴ Mitramiva priyam.

⁵ Priyam mitram.

⁶ Yuvâ sakhâ.

⁷ Priyânâm tvâ priyapatim havâmahe.

of most tender care and delicate hospitalities. The metaphor of the guest has been frequently used. 'He is the most endeared Guest,' says the Rigveda (VIII. 84.1). The Samaveda repeats the graceful expression. The Samaveda also describes Him as 'the Guest of the people' (1.7.5). By being called a Guest, the Deity is, as it were, taken outside the sphere of rituals and placed into a simple human relation with the masses of the people. The Yajurveda puts the idea into beautiful lines:

He is the Deity among all the receivers of oblation;

He is a Guest among all men (Ch. 38.16).

The divinity has been spoken of in terms of heroism and power. He is 'a Conqueror'; He is 'the Unconquered' (Rig. I. 11.2). He is a Monarch (Sam. I.7.5), a Self-ruler (Rig. VIII. 66.6).

He is also the Supreme Being: 'the Eternal Creator' (Rig. I. 72.1) and 'the One Lord of Creation' (Rig. X. 121.1):

'Through fear of Him the stable mountains are still; Through dread of His appearance heaven and earth tremble' (Rig. I. 61.14).

But He is also the Protector of the universe (Rig. II. 27.4), the Asylum of all men (Rig. I. 129.11). He is the source of strength and life and immortality :

Whom shall we worship with our oblations?

Him who is the giver of life and vigour;

Whom the world adores, the shining Ones obey,

Whose shadow is immortality, from whom is death

(Rig. X. 121.2).

These noble lines are reproduced in the Yajur and Atharva Vedas too.

He is the immanent Power in the collective life of men and Nature. He is 'the Leader of nations' (Rig. X. 112.9). He is the vast Being in whom the world of man has found embodiment: 'the thousand-headed Person' of whom 'the man of learning was the mouth, the man of battle the arms, the man of trade the thighs, and the working man the feet' (Rig. X. 90.1,12).

He is immanent in the stupendous phenomenon of the moving universe. In the perspective of time He with the changing seasons represents a grand libation:

'Spring was its *ājya* (sacrificial butter), Summer its fuel, Autumn its *havi* (sacrificial butter of another kind)' (Rig. X. 90.6).

Out of the sacrifice came the revelation of supreme wisdom:

'From the oblation were born the Rik and the Sāman; verses were born from that; from that was the Yajur born' (Rig. X. 90.9).

In the perspective of space, He is the source of all splendour.

'From His mind was born the Moon; from His eyes the Sun; from His mouth Indra and Agni; from His breath Vayu' (Rig. X. 90.13).

He is the grand embodiment of the universe:

'In His navel was the firmament; in His head the sky; from His feet was the earth; the directions from His ears; and so were the worlds created' (Rig. X. 90.14).

But He is also transcendent, beyond all phenomena. The sage in the Yajurveda declares:

'I have known that great Being who is like the sun beyond darkness. By knowing Him one obtains immortality. There is no other way to go' (81.18).

From this sublimity the Vedas also bring the divine to the familiar world of man. His presence surrounds our life.

'He is eastward, He is westward;
He is northward, He is southward.'
(Rig. X. 86.14).

He is in all things; transcendental-immanental:

'Pervading the beings, pervading the worlds, pervading the different directions, He surrounded the Self by the Self' (Yajur. 31.11).

But in a detailed sense He is not only in Man, but in all sorts of men: The Atharva Veda addresses the supreme Being (Brahman) as follows:

'Thou art Man, Thou art Woman;
Thou art Boy, Thou art Maiden;
Thou art the old One, tottering on the stick' (X. 8.27).

Here we are brought to the heart of Aryan culture, where the dividing line between the finite and the infinite, the human and the divine is withdrawn. And nowhere is poetry richer in its content than when dealing with such themes.

The Vedas fully represent another typically Aryan trait: the quest of the unknown. Frequently the poetic visions are interspersed with obstinate questionings of the soul regarding the ultimate nature of reality. In the following verse of the Rigveda the poetic wonder merges into a philosophical investigation:

'Ignorant, I inquire of sages who know. . . . What is the One alone who has upheld these six spheres in the form of the Unborn?' (I. 164.6).

The Vedas claim their title (Veda = knowledge) by finding an answer to this question. In fact, in the last analysis poetry is little thought of in relation to

that knowledge. 'What are the verses worth to him,' says the Rigveda, 'who has not known the Eternal Being?' (I. 164.89).

But this knowledge is understood to belong to a spiritual experience and cannot be reduced to a clear-cut formula. The mind is left with an inscrutable mystery (Rig. I. 152.5). But the spirit of man finds in this mystery the supreme fact of its experience and the supreme poetry. Therein lies the final realization, the highest goal of its adventure.

And it is in that Mystery that the Vedic seer has found the rallying point of the universe. So says the Yajurveda:

The Seer beholds That Which is
mysterious,
Wherein the universe becomes one
nest;
In That all this attains complete
harmony*

(Ch. 32.8).

It is not often in world literature that one may come across such bold idealism, so poetically expressed.

So the Vedic sages saw their visions and built lofty verses, celebrating the One in many terms.

'The Deity who is One the wise poets contemplate in many forms through their words' (Rig. X. 114.5).

The words of the Vedas, being true to noble poetic visions, did not create division or schism in respect of the divine idea. The worshippers interchanged the names of the Deity worshipped with such untroubled ease that readers, accustomed to the conception of a jealous personal divinity, find something unusually perplexing here. But

* The Atharvaveda, while reproducing the first two lines, changes the 'one nest' (ekānidam) into the more philosophical 'one form' (ekā-rūpam) (Ath. II. 1.1).

if the world could return to the same poetic attitude and could call the divine by all the different names invented by different religions in the different languages with the same untroubled

facility, then religion would find a new plane on which to live unaffected by sectarianism which substitutes a blind zeal for the radiant poetic sense of reality.

SUBSTANCE IN SWINBURNE

BY JAMES H. COUSINS

(Concluded from the previous issue)

It has been recorded that Swinburne's favourite among his own poems was 'Hertha,' and that it was a deliberate statement of the humanistic idealism, the divinity of humanity, that he reached after his phases of sensuousness and reaction against it, and of castigation of the crudely material conception of the Spirit of the Universe. In the now far-off end of the nineteenth century, whose decadence students of poetry in my time in Dublin tried to mask under the apparently respectable term *fin de siècle*; when those who did not read Swinburne were regarded as literary barbarians; when the new electric tramcars moved to the lilt of 'the hounds of spring' and the country in summer was full of the 'lisp of leaves and ripple of rain,' when an Episcopal curate to whom I lent a copy of 'Poems and Ballads' got Swinburne on the brain and had to be pleaded with to keep his sermons to the Thirty-nine Articles and plain prose—I found myself feeling towards 'Hertha' as Yeats did towards 'Prometheus Unbound,' esteeming it not only a poem but a scripture, as full of preachable texts as 'Hamlet' to the man who heard it for the first time and said it was full of quotations. Readings of 'Hertha' at intervals in the forty years between then and now have not reduced my young estimate of the poem. Rather

has my growing understanding of life and history and its exposition by the oriental mind given me a deeper insight into the philosophical content of 'Hertha' and the intuitive imagination from which it descended into the limitations and inevitable contraries of expression.

The poem, an elaboration of the Teutonic mythological conception of the Earth Goddess, puts the substance of Swinburne's higher mind—the region of his consciousness that responded to the vast generalities of human life and its cosmic environment, as distinct from his lower mind that reacted to local details and sometimes, went wrong in its reactions—into an undisturbed and fairly succinct presentation; and is therefore useful to those students of poetry who, unlike myself, prefer direct statement to broken and veiled indications that have to be pieced together and clarified in order that the reality and totality of a poet's central response to the universe may be reached.

Perhaps the most obvious feature of 'Hertha' is its list of opposites and complementaries that Swinburne attributes to the Goddess, such as :

I am that which unloves me and
loves; I am stricken, and I am the
blow.

I the mark that is missed
And the arrows that miss. . . .

The search, the sought, and the
seeker, the soul and the body that
is. . . .

'the grain and the furrow,' the ploughed
sod and the ploughshare, 'the deed and
the doer,' 'the seed and the sower.'
These imaginative antitheses call to
memory Emerson's paraphrase of the
Vedic conception of the Creative Being
of the universe in his poem 'Brahma,'
especially the stanza—

They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The identification here of the Universal
Soul with that which denies or doubts
it, is in marked contrast to the Catholic
dualism sung by Aubrey de Vere in his
'May Carols,' in which he sees the
human being turn away from the Voice
of God only to realize that

Thy love outstrips me on the way:

From Thee, O God! I fly to Thee.
The futility of the human entity's
attempt to free itself from the enfolding
Universal Being was elaborated later
by Francis Thompson in 'The Hound
of Heaven;' but, like de Vere, he could
not free himself from the imposed
doctrinal limitation that kept the
human item apart from the cosmic
totality, a doctrine that stands in opposi-
tion to the Biblical declaration of the
omnipresence of God.

The common point in 'Brahma' and
'Hertha' is their enunciation of the
monistic-cum-subjective view of things;
that is, the acceptance of the plain fact
that, to the human consciousness,
nothing has any reality save that which
comes within its own field and conforms
to its own nature, contents and condi-
tions. In the course of the individual
life, experiences are gained, understand-
ing is increased, reactions and judge-

ments are quickened and assured; and
with these extensions comes the
inference of incalculable materials of
life in an inferred universe beyond the
horizon of individual consciousness, and
of incalculable possibilities of expansion
towards assimilation of such inferred
materials. That such an extra-con-
scious, or supra-conscious, universe is
pressing on the individual consciousness
from all directions at all times is axio-
matic in the subjective view of life.
That this pressure is the cause of the
inherent human tendency towards
expansion of life in various directions is
equally axiomatic and the root of
subjective optimism. But at any stage
in the history of individual expansion,
nothing exists to the individual con-
sciousness that has not been translated
into its own terms. And on the misty
verge between the attained and the
inferred attainable, the individual
consciousness is held in a state of
poise between the pull towards expan-
sion and the tendency to fixation that
is inherent in attainment; and in those
who respond with special delicacy and
alacrity to the pull of the larger life,
there is the natural yet perilous possi-
bility of mistaking the repercussions of
aspiration, in visions and voices, as
authentic objective intimations from
the life beyond that of the individual,
whose existence, as the result of fre-
quent expansion of experience and
enlarged inference, has become a con-
viction and the source of individual and
organized claims to revelation and the
possession of truth. That such intima-
tions may, *ex hypothesi*, be authentic
cannot be denied: that they may not
be authentic is, *ex hypothesi*, a possi-
bility that cannot be ignored; and
between these two contours on the hill-
side of consciousness are all stages
between innocent self-delusion and
veritable seership.

Looking at 'Hertha' with these matters in mind, we observe in the poem a clear declaration of her nature as the source and soul of all manifested life. Five centuries before Christ, Laotze in China wrote:

Before the heaven and earth were formed, there was a secret and formless something, self-existent and changeless, moving without rest, which may be the Mother of the Universe. Not knowing her name, I call her Tao, the Universal Process.

Swinburne, in the withering nineteenth century after Christ, called her 'Hertha.'

I am that which began.
Out of me the years roll;
Out of me God and man;
I am equal and whole;

God changes and man, and the form of them bodily:

I am the soul.

Reading this opening declaration of cosmic beginnings, we may at once rid the poet of any mythological responsibility, and regard 'Hertha' as his own re-creation of the universe in the figurative terms that poetry, as distinct from philosophy, uses. The 'Goddess' that he has in his imagination is no personification of the Mother Earth, of whom Rabindranath Tagore sang:

From your breast you have fed us with life but not with immortality. She is, to Swinburne, more primitive than primordial substance. She is not even the Process of Taoism. She is that conceivable stage of the Universal Life out of which Process emerges, Process that out of itself and its infinitely varied though affined constituents creates the infinitely varied forms of life, from the highest, that man has called Gods and Goddesses, to man himself, rather, man and woman, as the poem has it; from the starry firmament to the 'dust which is God.' These,

being in the realm of form, will ultimately change; but She from whom they have come forth remains: 'Before God was *I am*,' 'I am the soul.' In Upanishadic thought she is called Parabrahman, the universal Soul beyond manifestation. Bergson glimpsed her as creative evolution.

The relation of the Cosmic Mother to humanity is declared to be that of essential identity.

Before ever land was,
Before ever the sea, . . .

. . . . I was, and thy soul was in me. But the identity is not that of a fragment with a total: it is a much more profound and subtle relationship, a relationship not of form but of essence, of the divinely human and the humanly divine. Despite human ignorance or denial of this relationship, it remains.

But what thing dost thou now,

Looking Godward to cry,

'I am I, thou art thou,

I am low, thou art high?'

I am thou, whom thou seekest to find him; find thou but thyself, *thou art I*.

This is the proclamation of the inner status of humanity. The stanza just transcribed (*italics mine*) recognizes the defect of humanity from what Swinburne declares to be its real nature. But he had reached a new level in his developing thought, and, in the guise of 'Hertha,' turns prophet.

I that saw where ye trod

The dim paths of the night

Set the shadow called God

In your skies to give light;

But the morning of manhood is risen, and the shadowless soul is in sight.

It may be that the soul of Europe, half a century and more since Swinburne's prophecy, is no nearer the shadowlessness that he glimpsed in imagination

than the Italy of Mussolini is to the ideal republic that Swinburne hoped she would become. Yet it would be far from the truth to hold these apparent contradictions as other than inevitable stages on the way from darkness to light, sags in the ascending spiral of the human soul, and to regard his glimpse as untrue. True prophecy, which is of the receptive and creative imagination, is not a foretelling of events, which is of the calculating mind; but an intuiting of conditions whose fulfilment brings an end that is not a terminal fabricated out of the sticks and stones of itself, but that forever awaits it in the world of spiritual realities. To the veritable prophet 'the shadowless soul' is always 'in sight' for it is within himself and herself, where 'the kingdom of heaven' has been established since 'Hertha' began her 'process' of manifestation.

This shadowlessness of the human soul will naturally be a dark saying to the soul in shadow. Yet, by the very nature of things as expressions of the Cosmic Soul which is 'Hertha,' the shadow on the human soul cannot be total eclipse; it can only be at its deepest penumbral. The proclamation to humanity that, before the beginning of things, 'thy soul was in me,' is rounded out and completed in the further proclamation,

I am in thee to save thee

As my soul in thee saith. . . .

and if we read these two lines with full mind, we shall see the double implication that the impartation of the Cosmic Soul to the individual soul has the purpose of recalling the latter from the outer world to the inner; and that the purpose is met by the share of the Cosmic voice that is inherent in the fragment as in the whole. The redemptive impulse is inescapable. The

response to it has numerous varied restrictions from the conditions natural to time, which perpetually emanates from 'Hertha,' and space, in which She is perpetually involved. Experience will compel adjustments towards the harmonizing of the human voice, in solo and in chorus, with the voice of the Universal Being. Such adjustments are being made and anticipated to-day (1941) in the relatively free countries of the world as a result of the war. English newspapers are saying, as a consolation for suffering, that if this or that reform in human relationships is established as a necessity in time of war and a probable fosterer of peace, the war will have been worth it—an illuminating admission of the dullness of response to the ideal in the mass of humanity in normal circumstances.

[It is true that all but a handful of mankind thrill spontaneously to the 'vision splendid'; that destruction is a keener stimulant than construction; that schemes for a 'New World Order,' however necessary and reasonable they may appear to be, are forced into consciousness by the war, and depend for their fulfilment primarily on the merely physical contingency of who 'wins' the war. It is equally true that not even Swinburne's eloquence through the mask of 'Hertha' will have any effect on general human conduct and conditions. The readers of the poem are few, and from the sympathies of these it is remote, as Mr. Binyon says; and even in the few who read Swinburne with some degree of literary interest, there is, as in Mr. Binyon himself, the untenable superstition that the poet's work, as already quoted, has 'no broad and deep humanity,' when all through his poems, and climactically in 'Hertha,' there is a vision of human possibility, nay of human destiny, that, next to Shelley's, is the highest in

English poetry, and kin to the age-long vision of India.

The fact is that no statement of the mind, however it may appeal to the clear-minded few as a true statement of prevailing conditions and an efficacious prescription for their amending, can become as epidemic as the social, economic or other disease that it is intended to combat. Humanity in the mass is not interested in schemes for its ideal improvement, and can hardly be expected to be so while realistic necessity is so obvious and insistent; but it has hands and mouth outstretched and open for any and every offer of self-gratification, and it will change its ground as migratory birds do, for worms and weather, not from any aesthetical desire for change of scenery. The ideal scheme, even though it be itself an emanation of the penumbral stage of life, may have every promise of thinning the shadow between the individual and Hertha; but its acceptance will depend, not on its own theoretical merits, but on the capacity of response and the good-will of the mass of humanity. It used to be held as good psychological practice by those who regarded themselves as the guardians of good and the assessors of evil that one should accuse principles and not persons, that we should blame the sin, not the sinner—as through intemperance might get drunk without the aid of humanity in making and taking intoxicating drinks, or theft would pick its own abstract pocket. In the Herthan view of life, that is, the view that the Cosmic Mother is in all Her children, as they are in Her, there is no room for blame, or even for praise. All is in the 'Process,' and inevitable; and the most the Herthan mind—which is much the same as saying the Vedantic mind—can do is to leave blame or praise to the others, and recognize that relative

good and relative ill may, for the purposes of understanding and communication under the limitations of chronology and location, be seen as consisting less in antagonistic creeds and systems which are distorted to fit into the predilections of those who profess them, than in the beclouded nature of the majority of human beings. The sinning is, as Whitman might say, 'to the sinner, and comes back most to him,' and he would have added, 'and her.' The defect from the ideal is in the Process and beyond our judgements and sentences; but each elevation of the human consciousness from all but eclipse towards the perfect light may be savoured with satisfaction.

The technique of human unclouding, then, in the Swinburnian sense, is not in creeds and codes but in the purification and ascension of attitude and conduct; or, shall we say? in creeds and codes to the extent that they make for such purification and ascension; for we can exclude nothing from the Mother's being, which enfolds our own in all its grades and varieties, though we may appreciate the directions of things, for She is ever extruding Herself, and ever drawing Herself back to Herself. The cult of the World-Mother in its various reflections, in the 'Mariolatry' of one section of Christianity, in the Goddess-worship of Hinduism, and the veneration of the feminine aspects of the Buddha in China and Japan, is fundamental, though as yet partially and inadequately expressed. The cult of the World-Mother, in its Swinburnian expression, is not intellectual but vital; not in beliefs but in action in its greatest range. 'Faith without works is dead,' as the Christian apostle asserted. Works, if they make for increasing goodness and understanding of the interdependence of things, even without faith are alive. 'The wayfaring man, though a

fool,' cannot stray from the terrain of the Mother, for She is the terrain and its path; the river, and the landing-place as well, as Rabindranath would say.

The imagination of Swinburne received these implications of his vision, and transformed them in 'Hertha' into the vital essentials of a New World Order far beyond certain of the blind and spirit-less schemes that have been given currency in the last two years. He puts the essentials into two stanzas, the first two lines of which I have already quoted, but repeat here for completeness.

I am in thee to save thee,
As my soul in thee saith;
Give thou as I gave thee,
Thy life-blood and breath,

Green leaves of thy labour, white
flowers of thy thought, and red
fruit of thy death.

Be the ways of thy giving
As mine were to thee;
The free life of thy living,
Be the gift of it free;

Not as servant to lord, nor as master
to slave, shalt thou give thee to me.

The Herthan golden rule of the New World Order is, not that of doing unto others 'as ye would they should do unto you,' which is a compassionate concession to the human tendency to barter good for good, a gift for an expected gift; the antithesis of the superseded retaliation of 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' The Herthan rule is drastic, final, simple, uncompromising, unsentimental—*Give*; nothing more, nothing less; withholding nothing, expecting nothing; giving without proviso; not merely in the grand manner but in the celestial manner ('as I gave thee'); not a casual philanthropy or a habitual annual subscription to a

worthy cause, but the free gift of a free life.

I have referred above to the crevasse that opened out between the imagination and the intellect of Swinburne in 'Tristram of Lyonesse.' A similar crevasse is noticeable in 'Hertha.' I shall not mention it as in any way taking from the verity of his conception of the World-Mother, but as a reason for careful free consideration of the details through which the Herthan conception is sought to be carried out in life.

If we question closely the following stanzas we shall find in them an indication that super-mental imagination may not always coincide with 'fundamental brain-stuff'; that imaginatively one may receive 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth' in its essence, and mentally formulate and express truth only in spots or areas.

A creed is a rod,
And a crown is of night;
But this thing is God,
To be man with thy might,

To grow straight in the strength of
thy spirit, and live out thy life as
the light. . . .

The tree many-rooted
That swells to the sky
With frondage red-fruited,
The life-tree am I;

In the buds of your lives is the sap
of my leaves: ye shall live and not
die.

But the Gods of your fashion
That take and that give,
In their pity and passion
That scourge and forgive,

They are worms that are bred in the
bark that falls off; they shall die
and not live.

The first stanza quoted above is separated from the other two, but is in affinity

with them in subject. The three bring to a position of antagonism, on one side God-cum-humanity, on the other religion-cum-kingship; God as opposed to the expression of God in religion, humanity as opposed to the oppression of humanity by kingship. (Swinburne shared this emotional antagonism to religion and rulership with Shelley, one of 'his own instinctive preferences and chosen models' (Binyon). The development of the higher criticism in both literature and theology since the time of these poets, whatever effect it has had on priests and kings as persons, and despite the easy notion that respect for the sacred and secular is a reminiscence of childhood's deference to motherhood and submission to fatherhood, has uncovered religion and rulership as primary strata in the geology of life. The reactions of the poets to the circumstances of their time and place were of the nerves, not of the brain-stuff; and, as all emotional reactions do, obscured the firmament of consciousness with emanations from their own share of earth which they mistook for cloud and lightning to which they responded with magnificent thunderings.

Emerson, a contemporary of Swinburne though a generation older, and born into an environment of intellectual adventure, not of emotional animus, saw the matter of religion with quite different eyes. 'The religions of the world,' he said, 'are the ejaculations of a few imaginative men.' The *sangham* (Buddhist priesthood) followed the *dhamma* (the law attributed to the Buddha); the Church followed the Gospel. The priesthoods were made by the religions, not the religions by the priests. The hunger for the larger life, which is the essence of religion in all times and places, is fundamental. Priesthoods may modify the expression

of religion, but the essence remains incorruptible. The priestly office is itself immovable from the technique of life. A priest is, etymologically, an elder (*L. presbyter*), one who is farther along the road of experience and capable of showing ways to the younger. Emerson said that everyone is waiting for 'a brother who can hold him steady to a truth, until he has made it his own.' He spoke thus of the poet, but the same may be said of the priest who is the exponent of imaginative ejaculations which are in reality poetry, seeing that poetry at its highest is religion.

(So also of kingship and kings. Shelley and Swinburne, for all the humanitarianism of the one and the humanism of the other, were so drastic, when the imagination was lowered by local and temporary emotions, that the apostle of love as the cure of all ills could visualize the ruthless extermination of the rulers of humanity; and the prophet of the divinity of humanity (who had been long anticipated by the seers of both east and west), failed to observe the usefulness of embodiments of synthesis and central discipline in the general life as models of the individual synthesis and discipline that are essential to the attainment of any degree of divinity in human life.)

Keeping to Swinburne and kingship: the phrase, 'The king is dead: long live the king!' is not a declaration of mere artificial transfer of allegiance from one ruler to another, but of the continuity of the office under changes of personality. Kings are not the creators of rulership, but its servers. In the old Anglo-Saxon sense, the office of king, the centre of the kin or related group, is as essential to the good of the kin as the central consciousness and the informed will are to the sane human individual: not the lower aspect of the will in irresponsible, sensuous, and

selfish impulses, which make for disintegration, but the will made wise by consciousness, as Hardy puts it in the last line of 'The Dynasts:'

Consciousness the will informing till
it fashion all things fair.

It may be true that quite a number of priests and kings have fallen short of the high purpose of religion and rulership, and may have given the poets legitimate cause for vituperation: but the point here is that the poets, in the ardour of their temperaments, failed to see the shadowy realities that stood behind the solid temporalities of obnoxious personages; and performed the operation, generally regarded as undesirable, of 'throwing out the child with the bath-water.' A creed may be 'a rod;' a crown may be 'of night.' But the rod may have the curve of the shepherd's staff that guides the self-willed and uninformed single consciousness into the ultimate fold of conjoint assurance and rest; and the crown may be not merely of the darkness of night, but of the majestic circlet of the zodiac.

There is another, and it will be my final as it is the most searching, consideration regarding the apparent lesion between Swinburne's imaginative intuition of cosmic fundamentals and his intellectual and emotional reactions to certain aspects of human activity; a consideration that does not touch the merits or demerits of religion and rulership or their opposites, rationalism and republicanism, but goes down to the root fact that the judge who pronounced sentence on creeds and kings, Hertha, the World-Mother (Jagadamba), was an invention of the myth-making imagination, and that in the poem Swinburne went far beyond the simple conception of the Teutonic devotees of a north European island ages ago. He was himself the creator of the God that

Hertha placed in the heavens, and of the God of whom humanity is a reflection in the stanzas last quoted; he was the creator of the Hertha of the poem. 'Out of me, God and man,' she is reported to have said; and we may add, 'Out of the man Swinburne, God and Hertha.' It seems almost too dialectically cheap to point out that the omnipresence attributed by Swinburne to Hertha would not have stopped at the God in the heavens, if it were indeed omnipresence, but would have descended to the Gods of man's fashion, and to creeds and crowns and many other things as well, including poets whose chantings around the lower slopes of consciousness do not appear to harmonize with their vision on the peak.— But, if we listen closely, we may hear Whitman's rebuke:

Do I contradict myself? Very well,
I contradict myself. I am large.
I contain multitudes.

The criticism that I have made above does not, be it said, reduce the quantity or quality of the substance of Swinburne's poetry: it is, indeed, a testimony to its existence. One does not argue about what has no existence. Even Bernard Shaw, who made it a profession to argue about anything and everything, drew the line at arguing about nothing. Few English poets since Swinburne have raised a controversy over their ideas. And when the dust of the controversial arena has settled, and the champions of creeds and crowns have retired, quite satisfied to repeat favourite texts and study the ritual of coronation, Swinburne will be found standing in the middle of the ring equally satisfied that, whatever all the pother was about, his feet were planted on the pivot of truth. As Francis Thompson sings ('Song of the Hours')

To what has the vaunt of modern civilization and progress come? Has science with all its truth and light been destined to be the chief means of this terrible holocaust, sweeping armageddon, this blood-bath? The Peace of Versailles promised the dawn of a new era of hope and fulfilment, a better and juster world-order on the wake of a devastating war. But alas, the roseate hue of its dawn soon deepened into a murky grey; the Kellog Pact, the League of Nations, the International Court at Hague and such other things turned out to be patch-works on flimsy foundations. Hardly a decade had passed when the world was caught in the grips of a hitherto unknown economic depression paralysing trade and commerce and causing untold misery; and then followed the unhappy episodes of the Sino-Japanese, the Italo-Abyssinian and the Civil War in Spain, all culminating in the present war which outbeats all similar ventures of the past in its vast proportions and irrecoverable damages. Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, the mighty and cultured France have fallen one by one; the emerald Isle on the other side of the Channel is now its main object; Britain stands single-handed in greatest cohesion and grim resolve, engaged in a life-and-death struggle for the sake of its very existence. The New World profoundly affected is still undecided, vacillating between isolated defence and active participation. Japan has seized the opportunity readily and seeks to extend its hegemony throughout the East.

The unprecedented violence of the war has touched India to the quick; but before contributing her mite in men and materials in right earnest, she seeks to know clearly and definitely if the avowed object of the British Commonwealth in taking part in the war for the

defence of liberty, independence and democracy from organized dictator-ridden gangsterism along with its Gestapo, concentration camps, mass executions and other persecutions is for all peoples all over the world irrespective of caste, creed and colour; and if so, is it a mere intellectual assent or a practical proposition of immediate appliance?

Thus is the whole world engulfed. It is in the throes of unparalleled sufferings and travails. What will come out of it is beyond human comprehension to forecast. But whatever it is, is there any certainty, any definite guarantee that the peace which will come at the end of this war will be of permanent standing? The past does not afford us sure ground for this confidence. Wars were plenty in the world in the past between peoples of the same country, of different countries and continents. Belligerents in every war put forth that they were fighting respectively for a just cause, that their success will bring in the wished-for millennium without any doubt. But every peace concluding every war has proved in the long run the seed of a fertile crop of a never-ending series of after-wars, a perpetual sowing of the mythical dragon's teeth of strife.

Human mind constituted as it is mainly of a causal sequence seeks to find out the worth of particular peace conditions in going back to the causes of the war which ended in them and examining how far the latter offered a ground of satisfactory solution of the former. The causes of wars are obvious in the pages of history. Every schoolboy knows how almost all the European wars since the Middle Ages have for their common cause colonial, commercial and naval rivalry. The search for new territories, quest of plunder, political subjection and

aggrandizement, religious dissensions, establishment of power for economic exploitation and the like are everywhere known to be the general causes of wars, whatever may be the immediate ones which are but sparks to ignite the combustible material already in hand. History speaks of only these two kinds; but what about the *root-cause*? It is one and everywhere the same; the blood of the fox, the pig and the wolf is in man, says the great humanitarian Tolstoy, and immoral living, living at the cost of others gives it free play and the weak are taken advantage of; they wait for their chance; violence begets violence; justice cries out in the guise of fate. When all is not well, something is rotten in the state of Denmark, foul deeds rise and overwhelm the sweet mother earth. Wars break out; but instead of solving the thorny problems for which they ostensibly arise, they thicken the atmosphere with greater misery, heart-burning and an unrestricted play of animalic passions. The dregs of a battle, however brilliant, are ever a base residue of dreadful carnage, rapine, cruelty and drunken plunder, says the great novelist Thackeray. Cruel means can never secure a peaceful end. The victors forget all their avowal of righteousness in the flush of victory and become eager for the division of spoils: the vanquished, sullen and discontent, abide their time with lacerated hearts to turn the tide. All the tall talks of planning a better world are forgotten in the heated impulse of the moment; warnings of men of vision and deep human feelings are mockingly set aside.

Thus the seething cauldron goes on bubbling. And the present catastrophe has come. It is said this of all wars is fought more on account of an inherent clash of ideologies than any immediate point-at-issue. What is

the touch-stone of proving the beneficence or otherwise of these different sets of ideologies? The pity of it is from the beginning of times both sides in every war have been proclaiming loudly the absolute rightness of each one's cause and the absolute wrongness of the other side. Whatever it be, the burning reality of the thing is not one of outward assertion but inward self-scrutiny, and that has been wanting in every case and so the cycle is running endless. Men of the concerned times thought in one way, but the verdict of history in the light of evolution has been different. And now at this late hour after so much bitter and harrowing experience thoughtful men all over the world with hearts wrung with despair and filled with unrelieved gloom naturally turn and ask, is there then no hope? Is mankind thus destined to exterminate one another, to wipe itself out of existence? Is there no salvation for it? Is it beyond redemption? Are there no securer foundations on which can be built a stabler world-order? At least no new chapter to turn and experiment and anticipate?

It is our sincerest conviction that there is. While life lasts, there is hope. Life is real, life is earnest, sings the poet; it cannot be doomed so lightly. The healthy man does not realize the value of health, but the sick dearly values it and attempts to achieve it whole-heartedly. From the darkness of deepest despair comes out unexpectedly the brightest ray of comfort and guidance. Such is the enigmatic play of Divinity. Man's fulfilling creativity which has enshrined itself in such priceless treasures of philosophy and art, thought and culture can never be meant for such an ignominious despicable downfall.

The new chapter is to be opened and

that is the chapter of the Vedanta. It may be new to the mad rushing world of the day, but in reality it is the oldest, nay eternal. In this grave crisis of humanity the Upanishads, the acme of human thought and realization, cannot but furnish materials and inspiring suggestions for guiding it in more fruitful channels and restricting this deplorable phenomena of life to the utmost as far as possible. Vedanta to the ignorant may be mere metaphysical speculation losing itself in the arid sands of dry abstraction or at best moralistic cant. But a careful study of it from a positive view-point will show the error of these assumptions and the invaluable guidance it gives us at this hour of dire peril.

Vedanta does not ignore the socio-politico-economic structure of human society, the fissures and maladjustments which are not a little responsible for these periodical crises. It clearly points out the rich significance of individual as well as collective life and insists on its fullest unobstructed development. Realization is not for the weak, the destitute, the downtrodden; strength and prosperity are essential. 'May my limbs, speech, breath, eye, ear, all my senses grow strong and vigorous. . . . By the Self one attains *vitality*.'¹ 'With strong limbs and bodies may we fulfil in worship what life is allotted to us. . . . May the cosmic forces of waxing glory and unobstructed path bestow prosperity on us.'² 'May we be led on to prosperity along the auspicious path.'³ 'Let there be fame for *all* of us. . . . He who understands the great *Samhitas* becomes endowed with progeny, cattle, intellectual vigour, nourishment, and the heavenly world. . . . Let our bodies be fit, our tongues be of supreme

sweetness; let us hear much with our two ears; let our learning be protected. We seek the bringer, the extender and the long maintainer of our own dresses, cows, food and drink for ever; that prosperity brings me with woolly and other cattle. . . . May I be among men of repute, more renowned among the most wealthy. . . . Bring to the teacher the wealth that is pleasing to him; do not cut off the line of progeny. Let there be no neglect of welfare and prosperity, of what is due to gods and departed forefathers. . . . From food verily are produced whatsoever creatures dwell on earth; then by food alone they live. . . . Let the student be a goodly youth, most firm and strong. To him this whole earth shall be filled with wealth.'⁴ 'This earth is sweet as honey to all creatures; all creatures are like honey to this earth.'⁵ 'What is great is bliss.'⁶ 'Increase again and again for me.'⁷

Thus it is seen that the Vedanta does not dwell upon a false negation of life, but on its perspicuous actuality. It seeks a fuller, richer, happier life. But at the same time it raises the clear warning that it should be denied to none; it should not be the reserve of a chosen few who can grind all others in poverty to their advantage. 'Let it guard and protect *all* of us. Let us *all work together*. Let us *not dislike one another*.'⁸ Proper opportunities towards self-advancement must be for one and all. And when Western imperialism discards this most elementary Vedantic teaching under a false plea of trusteeship, racial superiority, higher efficiency and the like, what wonder is there that its structural

¹ *Kens.*

² *Prashna.*

³ *Ishavasya.*

⁴ *Taittiriya.*

⁵ *Brihadaranyaka.*

⁶ *Chandogya.*

⁷ *Aitareya.*

⁸ *Katha.*

foundations are knocked at from time to time in an attempt to break the *status quo*, to maintain which again is made a frightful increase of armaments and thus war inevitably results.

But Vedanta does not stop here. It is not satisfied with a gospel of self-interest however enlightened and even corporate it be. Utilitarianism has such a knack of degenerating itself into arrant selfishness. The mighty minds of ancient India realized that without ethical discipline lower nature is sure to predominate, to run riot. Hence is the supreme importance they laid in every word or action of theirs on the cultivation of moral excellence. 'May we hear and see what is *auspicious* with our eyes and ears.'⁹ 'May the celestial ones of wide strides be *auspicious* to us.'¹⁰ 'May my speech be *well established* in my mind, my mind in my speech.'¹¹ 'Covetest thou not any one's riches. Keep away from us *deceitful sin*.'¹² 'Man cannot be propitiated with *wealth*. . . the supreme world *free from blemishes* is for those in whom there is *no crookedness, untruth and deceit*.'¹³ 'Different is the *good* and different indeed is the *pleasing*. It becomes well with him who accepts the good. But he who chooses the pleasing falls away from the purpose. Both the good and the pleasing come to man. One who is wise considers the two all round and discriminates them. He chooses the good in preference to the pleasing. One who is stupid chooses the pleasing for the sake of acquisition and property. . . . The immature pursue *outward pleasures*; they are caught in the far-flung snare of death.'¹⁴ 'Truth alone

reigns supreme; not untruth. . . . Whatever world a man of *purified nature* thinks in his mind and whatever desire he desires, all those worlds and desires he attains.'¹⁵ 'A religious student should be disciplined and tranquil. . . . Speak the truth, practise *virtue*, do not neglect highest learning. Let mother, father, teacher and guest be gods to you. Be devoted to *blameless deeds, good customs* that are among us, no others. Men of *light and culture* should be comforted. Gifts should be given *freely with faith, plenty, modesty, fear and sympathy*. When there is doubt regarding *conduct*, we should follow those who live with us and devoted to good deeds, not led by others, *not cruel*, and lovers of virtue and *competent to judge*. In accusing sin the instructions of the same should be followed. . . . Let the student be the best maintainer of *discipline*.'¹⁶ 'Whatever good things people do, they all *come over* to him Through *purity* of food results purity of intellect, from it steady memory; through the latter all knots are completely broken.'¹⁷ 'Do not *injure man or beast*.'¹⁸

The gamut of ethical realization is covered in these teachings. They are to be understood not theoretically as the Sermon on the Mount is now by most of the professed followers of the church, but in the context of comprehensive practical conduct. It is not a matter of 'I know how old men preach and what young men practise,' not playing the moralist and crying 'Fie,' not a question of outward show, but inward growth of stature and revelation. It is the lack of this ethical discipline that is mostly responsible for

⁹ Prashna.

¹⁰ Taïttiriya.

¹¹ Aitareya.

¹² Ishavasya.

¹³ Kena.

¹⁴ Katha.

¹⁵ Mundaka.

¹⁶ Taïttiriya.

¹⁷ Chandogya.

¹⁸ Shvetashvatara.

the present lamentable world impasse. Modern science divorced from it has become simply a handy weapon for the human genius bent on destruction. It boasts that it is out to grasp what it calls the bare, the naked truth, but forgets that there is a truth in moral idealism intrinsically more true. As such it is not able to reveal the springs of human actions, nor discover the spiritual bearing of human events. No doubt in minutely dissecting and explaining the organization of matter it has made man the master of hitherto unknown domains of power; but without the searchlight and discipline of ethical idealism and spiritual intuition all its powers of discoveries and inventions have only been like fire or a sharp knife placed in the hands of an infant. Drunk with these new-fangled, misunderstood misdirected powers, atheistic materialism deliberately flings all ethical injunctions to the winds as meaningless taboos; on the other hand organized institutionalism makes a fetish of it, a convenient cloak to hide its awful selfishness and gross sensuality, with what results we see before our own eyes. It is never too late to mend. A proper cultivation of ethical virtues, it goes without saying, will restrict and eliminate war to a great extent.

But morality itself is not self-sufficient to control and combat with this greatest evil of life. It needs a stronger, a more enduring support. The tempestuous urges of instinct-ridden life are sometimes too strong for it to withstand. Here comes the question, what is the *rationale* of all morality? Why should I be good, kind and loving to others? And it is in answering these questions that the Vedanta reaches its highest pinnacles—the absolute reality of the unity of being and identity of all existence and

morality then becomes self-evident and fully significant. 'From death to death he goes who sees here a manifold. . . . The wise who perceive the One as existing in themselves, for them is eternal peace, indescribable supreme happiness, not for others. . . . He who is free from desire and sorrow perceives the glory of the Self. . . . What is the greatest sovereignty over earth, wealth and long life, unlimited fulfilment of desires, for they last till to-morrow; they wear away the vigour of all the senses; even every kind of life is small indeed. . . . Tasting the immortal which mortal being, knowing what colours and enjoyments are, delights in the life here.'¹⁹ 'May I not discard the Absolute, may the Absolute not discard me; let all the functions be dedicated to the realization of the Self.'²⁰ 'The Absolute is the real, the truth; may that protect me.'²¹ 'Through renunciation of this world mayest thou enjoy. . . . He who uniformly sees all beings even in his self and his own self in all beings does not feel repelled therefrom.'²² 'That supreme world which is not made cannot be won through works. . . . In front, behind, to the right and the left, above and below is the Absolute. Absolute alone is this universe. . . . The wise man sports and delights in himself.'²³ 'He who really sees sees no illness, death or pain. He sees everything, attains everything in every way. . . . May we go to the other shore of darkness.'²⁴ 'Brahman is fearlessness. . . . If this entire earth filled with wealth were ours, we would not be immortal. . . . Not indeed for the love of all is all dear, but for the love of the Self. . . . Lead me from unreality

¹⁹ Katha.

²⁰ Kena.

²¹ Aitareya.

²² Ishavasya.

²³ Mundaka.

²⁴ Chandogya.

to reality, from darkness to light, from death to immortality."²⁵

Clash, function, struggle will be as long as we remain in the phenomenal, and the hard competitive business day-to-day world with its opposites and ceaseless strivings clings to the phenomenal. As such it may not be feasible for human society in general to be completely warless. Perfect warless society is unpredicable at this juncture, though not an impossibility. On the wake of Asoka's rock and pillar edicts bearing the unique record of a large empire based and governed on and by Ahimsa, came Samudragupta's edicts extolling his martial valour and glory. Life is so incalculable, intransigent, torn between polarities of strains and stresses. True to life ancient Indian polity realized the proportionate value and necessity of military training and properly organized it. And at the same time true to greater life it earnestly sought to utilize all this training only in furthering the cause of Dharma; militarism as a creed was discouraged. The memorable background of the Mahabharata war and Sri Krishna's exhortation to Arjuna to take part in it after all peaceful negotiations had failed and the wickedness of the Kauravas had been clearly proved furnish practical illustration of the way in which its spirit worked out. But all the same it had its own slips. The ideal and the actual are worlds apart; what is ever falls short of what ought to be. But that does not mean we may merrily go our way and ignore the ideal. In fact we cannot; our life will have no significance then. The part, the fraction can only be intelligible on the background of the whole, the relative on that of the Absolute, the fleeting on that of the permanent.

" Brihadaranyaka.

True humanity consists in approximating to the ideal from the hard ground of the actual. And Vedanta points to us both and the golden link that joins them; it inspires us to act.

All that is built on others' blood, acquired on the path of heaving sighs and drowning groans of the oppressed will be snatched from our hands one day or other. Nothing can prevent its inevitable decay. If no harmonious balance is restored through the path of renunciation, service and fellowship at the outset, nature will have her own course through her 'red tooth and claw.' Yudhishtira once said it is the greatest wonder that every moment living beings enter the shadowy realm of death and yet the remaining think themselves immortal. As with man, so with empire. Where are the mighty far-flung empires of the old--the Chaldean, Babylonian, Assyrian, Greek and Roman. No, the disease is desperate and deep-rooted and requires drastic treatment. 'Statesmen' along with their 'negotiations' cannot save the situation; nor can the conventional 'pacifists' of the *status quo*. It goes without saying that the present socio-politico-economic structure of human society should be more fruitfully adjusted; a more equitable distribution of world's material resources and proper enjoyment of the elementary rights of citizenship is a fundamental requisite of peace. But on the other hand it is to be borne in mind that without the depth, the poise and the rhythm of spiritual virtue, more often than not it topples down in being pandered to individual predilections or party power-cults. To speak of big things out of the little self is so preposterous; it is so persistently obtrusive, so overwhelmingly attributive. Is there sincerity--transparent, glowing, heartfelt sincerity, deep sympath-

tic desire, complete dedication for and to the *good of all*: that is the crucial test. True saints and sages, the salt of the earth stand this test unscathed and they are the supreme need of the hour.

Misunderstanding, intolerance, brutishness lead to war. How to remove them? Let us think more deeply; the cure of ineffectual thought is still deeper thought. 'All those have intelligence as their eye and are established in it; the world has it as the eye; it is its support; intelligence is the supreme. . . . Understanding is truth and he who does not swerve from it enjoys all his desires.'²⁶

War tests the utmost cohesive force of different sections of people; it requires courage, planning, initiative. But to what base ends, what tremendous sheer wastage then are these divine faculties yoked in its course? How thousandfold noble and bold it is, what limitless self-sacrifice, discipline, realization it warrants to use them in the cause of peace, benediction, trust and faith and world-brotherhood. 'The path of peace is like the sharp edge of the sword.'²⁷ Let us prepare to walk over it, the path of peace in supreme blessedness,—scanned, treasured, vivified from the bottom of the heart in the glorious effulgence of the spirit; not the semblance of it as it is found

in the armoury of present-day diplomacy.

Sweet are the uses of adversity, sings the poet. It is 'the great reconciler; it brings averted kindness, disarms animosity and causes yesterday's enemy to fling his hatred aside and hold out a hand to the fallen friend of old days.'²⁸ May our present deep suffering impress upon us both the vanquisher and the vanquished these salutary lessons; for as the Vedanta points out the conqueror and the conquered are not separate but one and the same, the living limbs of an organic whole; the injury of a single unit leads to the unavoidable disintegration of the whole structure.

Every one has his responsibility to fulfil in the sacred task of reconstruction and reconciliation awaiting us. Some cannot show the 'steep ascent' to others and go merrily themselves on the 'primrose path of dalliance.' Let us not forget that the smallest thought-wave in our minds affects world peace: the minutest friction in the remotest corner of the cosmos moulds us profoundly; the macrocosm is verily the microcosm. And then we cannot but join hands *not for some but for all*. India occupies a unique place in this respect; she will not fail to contribute her mite to the establishment of world peace.

Aitareya.
Katha.

¹ Thackeray: *Henry Esmond*.

TO SHIVA

O Shiva, rapt in wordless ecstasy in Thine own bliss
Beyond all change and strife,
Radiating peace and knowledge, yet unmoved
By their dead shadows in this show of life,
Thou for whose sake Parvati in her beauty and her youth
Practised hard penance down a gloomy road of years,
Killing them both,
Until her inner flame rose pure and bright
And thus unquenchable could merge itself in that great clarity
That is Thy Truth and Way,---making Thee consort of her truest life;
Friend of Thy demons and all those
Who madly long for Thy pure rayless light,
Caught by the spell cast by Thy wisdom's serpent coiled about Thy neck,
Full of that Life that moulds all life and death, standing apart,
Connecting the beyond with this our life,
And yet not knowing a beyond but its own changelessness,
Eternal and abiding, endless, one;
Grant us Thy vision and Thy comradeship
In the dark, dreary, winding lanes of life,
That consciousness that is beyond all sleep and dream
And far beyond our waking being too,
United and uniting all to Thee;
For without Thee we cannot find our goal
In the bewildering mazes of Thy Play,
And we must lose ourselves in many dark and endless alleys,
Turning round and round through Thine illusion's magic veiling Thee.
O Mahadeva, take us by the hand and lead us silently across
The treacherous chasms life hides from our eyes
To that high Being where all pairs of opposites have vanished like a dream,
And where to be is all that ever was and is and will be for all time.

--WOLFRAM H. KOCH.

SWAMI PREMANANDA

BY BRAHMACHARI SIVACHAITANYA

(Concluded from the previous issue)

A new chapter of his life opened with the passing away of Swami Vivekananda. One could hardly realize then what boundless love and tenderness, what compassion and sweetness, what leonine power and great fire lay hidden within this meek and unobtrusive figure. The heavy responsibilities which came to rest on his shoulders gradually unfolded the beauty and richness of his personality. The task of looking after the affairs of the Mission had devolved on Swami Brahmananda. For this reason he had to travel in different parts of the country. So Swami Premananda was entrusted with the management of the Math at Belur. The daily service in the shrine, the training of the young Brahmacharins and Sannyasins, the various household duties of the monastery, the receiving of devotees and guests and instructing them on spiritual matters—all these crowded his hours with activities and left him little respite.

The father is reflected in the son. Some of Sri Ramakrishna's children specially recalled some aspects of the infinite excellences of the Master. Swami Premananda mirrored more than any one else the Master's all-consuming love for all. Monks, householders, devotees, visitors and guests, all felt the tenderness of his affection, and came to regard him as the mother of the monastery. Like an indulgent mother, he sheltered under his protecting wings those whose perverse ways had alienated them from society. His sympathy unlocked in many of these lost souls of the world

unsuspected springs of devotion and service.

A young man of Calcutta had strayed into evil paths under the influence of vicious company. An addict to intoxicants, he appeared to be heading towards utter ruin every day. The efforts of his friends and relatives to wean him away from his associates and habits came to naught. In the end they abandoned all hope in despair. Fortunately one of the relatives of the young man happened to be acquainted with Swami Premananda. He related everything before the Swami and begged his mercy. The Swami listened to everything patiently. He went to the boy's place one day and asked him to come to the Math. The boy came and enjoyed the day at the Math. As he was returning the Swami asked him to come again. The boy felt attracted to the Swami even at the first meeting and visited the Math several times. The alchemy of the Swami's love and kindness slowly transmuted the base metal of his character. 'How strange!' he thought, 'how could he bestow such tenderness and affection upon me who has been shunned even by my relatives and acquaintances in horror and shame. He knows all my misdeeds. No worldly ties bind me to him. No selfishness rules his affection. Yet how wonderful is his love!' Shortly after he gave up the world and became heir to the life of renunciation and service. Through his ennobling influence many rogues and drunkards gave up their evil habits and led pure lives in their later days.

Drawn by the invisible bonds of the Swami's love and consideration, the devotees began to flock in larger numbers to the Math. A single meeting sufficed to create a lasting impression on their minds. The springs of action of great saints remain hidden from public gaze. The Swami's purity and devotion and the Master's grace had lifted him to a plane of realization where the service of man became transformed into the worship of God. The extreme care which the Swami took in receiving and entertaining the devotees betrayed to the dullest mind glimpses of his transformed outlook. None could leave the Math without being entertained. The visitors often turned up at odd hours, so the midday meal could not be usually served earlier than 1-30 or 2 p.m. in the afternoon. And sometimes it so happened that a group of devotees unexpectedly arrived from a distant place while the monks were resting their tired limbs late in the afternoon. Swami Premananda would then proceed alone in silence to the kitchen to cook food for them himself, as he did not want to trouble the boys in their rest. The young Sadhus, however, when they came to know of this, would hurry to the kitchen and do everything. The Swami was highly pleased with those who came forward. He used to encourage and bless them saying, 'Well, the householders have to do a lot of things. Is it possible for them to come always at the proper time? And what can we do to them? We can only serve them and that costs us nothing but a little physical trouble. Through the Master's grace nothing is wanting here. Should we not be blessed by giving these things to his children?'

The concern for the devotees did not leave him even during his fatal illness. If anybody remonstrated with him for

his anxiety lest it should affect his health, he would reply, 'It's my nature. The service of the devotee is the worship of God.' A couple of days before he passed away, he called to his side a Sannyasin who looked after the managements of the Math during his absence and asked him in a voice tender with emotion, 'Could you possibly do one thing?' The Sannyasin replied, 'Please tell me what I am to do.' The Swami said, 'Will you be able to serve the devotees?' 'Yes, I shall,' was the reply. 'Don't forget then,' said the Swami almost imploring.

Standing on the adamant of faith, the Swami believed that everybody who chanced to partake of the food which had been offered to the Master was sure to put forth the sprout of spirituality in some future date. In his eyes persons who visited the Math had some special worth in them. He used to say, 'How many are the places for the people to seek pleasure in! Some go to garden houses, and others may be to places of amusement. But who come here, nevertheless must be understood to have some worth in them. Or why should they come at all?'

The Swami's ministrations did not end with the entertainments of a merely physical nature. He was anxious above everything that the devotees should grow in spirituality. He would snatch a few moments from his crowded hours in order to infuse into the heart a spirit of devotion to God and the ideal of detachment. Having their roots in love and untarnished by the slightest speck of egotism, his words would find their way direct into the sanctuary of their souls. He talked to the visitors and the new-comers after they had rested for a while after midday meal and again after the evening service to those who happened to

stay on. His one idea was to kindle the fire of devotion in them. When he spoke an exalted feeling would take possession of their minds, and they would always experience a certain degree of spiritual uplift.

As the talk proceeded the Swami would invariably grow warmer. His face lit up with divine effulgence, his voice aglow with animation, and his spirit aflame with celestial fire, he appeared to be a being from a different world. As they listened to the torrent of his impassioned speech, they would often feel that the purity and the holiness of the Swami were impinging on their physical frames like the vibrations of a mighty dynamo.

During holidays and vacations the students would sometimes come to spend a few days at the Math. Swami Premananda treated them like a mother. He often wrote instructive letters to those who came in close contact with him. His words and influence spread into the hearts of many a young soul and tinged them with the dye of a noble idealism. A good many monks of the Ramakrishna Order today look back to his inspiration as the decisive influence on their lives. To him they owe a debt which they cannot repay.

The Swami's solicitude for the well-being of the novitiates in the monastery knew no bounds. With infinite patience he endeavoured not only to instill into them the supreme ideal of renunciation and service but also to train them in the various practical duties of life. He aimed at an all-round development of abilities and disliked one-sidedness. He encouraged them to apply themselves to diverse tasks, and provided opportunities for the unfoldment of their manifold parts. 'You should learn,' he would say, 'how to work in every walk of life—be it service in the shrine, cook-

ing in the kitchen, the tending of cows, or scavenging. Be they great or small all works should receive your equal attention. Always take as much care of the means as of the ends.' Though he would eye with disfavour the slightest indifference to work, he was quick to forgive and forget all remissness. ,

Great teacher as he was, he knew that the leader must be prepared to sacrifice and to set the example. He taught more by his actions than by precepts. One of his favourite sayings was that a leader (Sardâr) must be ready to sacrifice his head (Sirdâr). A remarkable incident reveals not only this trait of his character but also his breadth of vision free from the trammels of a conventional social code.

A Muslim gentleman from Diamond Harbour, in the district of 24-Perganas, had one day come to the Math with a few Hindu friends. After he had visited the shrine, he was given some food on a few leaves. Everybody present showed some hesitation in taking away the leaves and clearing the spot after the gentleman had partaken of the food from them. Noticing this Swami Premananda came forward and took them away to the great surprise and discomfiture of all. A similar event also took place during his visit to East Bengal in 1917. A Muslim of a village in Mymensingh, where the Swami had gone, heard him speak of the one God who existed in all. Thereupon he asked the Swami if he could partake of the food touched by him. 'Yes, I can,' came the quick reply. Immediately some food was brought in a plate and he partook of it from the hands of the Mussulman without the least hesitation.

The management of the vast organization with its members of diverse temperaments and natures made heavy demands on the Swami's endurance,

patience, and forgiveness. His spirit was more than equal to them. One day he revealed his mind to a senior monk of the Order as to how he proceeded to his daily duties. He said, 'After finishing my meditation and Japa when I come down the stairs of the shrine, I utter again and again the Mantram of the Master—"Endure, endure (sa, sa, sa)," one who endures abides, one who does not is ruined.' Devoid of any trace of pride and egotism, he felt himself to be an instrument in the hands of the Master. His lofty spiritual vision had clothed the world with a divine light, from which evil had taken its flight. In the errors of others he detected his own shortcomings. He wrote in several of his letters:

'This lesson I have learnt at the feet of the Master. When the boys do any wrong, I reason and find that they are not at fault. Whatever fault there is, is mine.

'I do not harbour the idea that I am good. I have come to learn. There is no end to learning. May the Master give us right understanding—this is my prayer.

'By observing the faults of others we are gradually infected by them. We have not come to look at the faults of others and to correct them. But it is only to learn that we are here . . .

'Lord, Thou art everything. Whom should I scold? Everything is He; there is only a difference in the quantity of dust that covers the gold.'

Despite this meekness of spirit and humility, the Swami could be stern as well, if it became necessary. But, it was only a chastisement behind which beat the affectionate heart of a mother. When sweet words and loving counsels fell on deaf ears, the Swami would not hesitate severely to reprimand the delinquents. It was, however, a rebuke

which had no sting in it. And again like a loving mother he would make amends for this exhibition of sternness if it sent the boys to a sulk. He would soothe them with affectionate words and offer them the best things to eat.

During his last illness at Deoghar, a devotee used to bring the best available things for the Swami's attendants to eat. One day he scolded one of the attendants for taking such things, saying: 'The Master used to say that a Sadhu must restrain his greed and lust, and take only a half meal at night. But you are doing just the opposite out of greed.' The attendant felt hurt and left the place without anybody's knowledge. At the time of the midday meal the Swami noticed his absence and grew anxious. He suspected that the young man had taken his rebuke to heart and left the place. He sent out his other attendants to find him out. But they failed. In the evening while the Swami was sitting in a sad mood, the attendant entered the house by a back door. Coming to know of this he called him to his side and said: 'My boy, I am old and weakened by illness. I cannot always keep my temper. Should you fly into a rage if I happen to say anything in this my condition?' As he said this, tears filled his eyes. And he brought some sweets and fed him with his own hands. Sometimes he would also explain his attitude to console the chastised.

The Swami laid great stress on gentleness of behaviour. 'Be gentle first,' he would often repeat, 'if you desire to be a Sadhu!' He regretted: 'Nowadays none pays any attention to social and common good manners and gentle behaviour. The Master used to take extreme care to teach us these things.' By his eloquent and impassioned appeals he would firmly impress upon the novitiates the high ideals of

the Master and Swami Vivekananda. As he held out vividly before their imagination the wonderful renunciation of the Master, his keen thirst for God-realization, his unheard of devotion to truth, his strenuous religious practices and austerities, his wonderful realizations and his profound love and kindness for his disciples he would appear to be lifted out of the mundane plane and his words would electrify the audience. Thus he moulded the young minds in the cast of a new ideal.

In obedience to the command of Swami Vivekananda, Swami Premananda did not make any personal disciples to the end of his days. Yet his eagerness to help all along the path of spirituality seemed beyond comparison. Every action of his betrayed his anxiety for the spiritual welfare of the young flock under his care and supervision. He kept a vigilant eye on the daily religious practices of the boys. He insisted on their spending regularly a fixed time on them. He would inquire into their difficulties and doubts and would buoy up their flagging enthusiasm with words of cheer and inspiration. He is even said to have imparted spiritual power to a young monk by touch. Apart from his own help he used to send those who pressed him for initiation to the Holy Mother or to Swami Brahmananda and had them initiated by them.

It was Swami Vivekananda's dream that the Mission he founded should become the rallying point of a new revivalist spirit in India and that the monastery at Belur should become a great centre of learning from which would emanate noble and inspiring ideas. Swami Premananda made earnest efforts to realize an aspect of the Swamiji's dream, namely, to convert the Math into a great centre of Sanskrit learning. Through his efforts

a study circle was gradually formed under the guidance of a competent pundit. He also encouraged the study of other subjects like Western philosophy. The dissemination of education among the illiterate masses interested him greatly. He blessed and encouraged all who undertook such activities. He wrote to one:

'Be you the torch-bearers in the path of spreading knowledge. The cultivation of knowledge in the company of the Sadhus will impart a new appearance to the country, and the boys will have their lives' aim correctly determined. It is only by so doing that the boys will become men,—nay, they will become Rishis and gods What will one school or three or four Sevashramas avail? Have faith in God's grace, establish schools and Sevashramas in every town, village and hamlet.'

To the saintly eye of the Swami women were the manifestations of the Divine Mother. His attitude to them was literally one of worship. He behaved himself like a child in their presence. Drawn by his guileless manners, spotless purity and charm, and a certain amount of feminine grace about him, women found themselves quite at ease in his company. Even the ladies of certain aristocratic Muhammadan families, where the strict rules of the *purdah* were observed, would come to him at the Maths at Dacca or in Calcutta to listen to his words.

Imbued with the ideals preached by Vivekananda, he realized that a nation could never be great unless its women were educated and honoured. He not only exhorted the mothers of the nation to follow in the steps of the ideal womanhood of the past, but took great pains to instil into their minds the necessity of a liberal education. 'Let thousands of Niveditas come out of

Bengal . . . ' he wrote to a lady, 'Let there arise anew in the land numbers of Gargis, Lilavatis, Sitas, and Savitris. . . . What better thing is there in this world than learning? Give knowledge, and ignorance will vanish through its culture.'

The tie that bound the children of Ramakrishna was built up in equal measure of the strands of love and reverence. This reverential attitude towards the brother disciples was specially manifest in Swami Premananda. In the presence of Swami Brahmananda, the President of the Mission, he behaved himself like a humble servant. He would start his daily work after saluting him profoundly in the morning, if the latter happened to be at the Math.

He had the typical Sadhu's disregard for personal comfort. When he would sit down to eat, he would take the best things from his plate and distribute them among the junior members. His wardrobe never exceeded the demands of sheer necessity. During his illness at Deoghar a devotee gave to his attendant four shirts for his use. On coming to know of this, he severely scolded the attendant saying, 'I have never been accustomed to keeping too many shirts. Besides, it does not become a monk to have so much clothing.' When he passed away diligent search could discover only an empty canvass bag and a few books, which could be preserved as souvenirs.

Thus lived the Swami his unostentatious life for years away from the public gaze. Sometimes playing the part of a spiritual teacher, sometimes that of a loving mother and sometimes even that of a schoolmaster, he aimed at building up the real manhood of those who came under his influence.

After about six years of service the Swami set out on a pilgrimage to

Amarnath in 1911, in company with Swamis Shivananda and Turiyananda. On his return he went on a tour to different parts of Bengal, preaching the universal message of the Master. The enthusiasm he evoked by this tour is still a living memory with many. East Bengal in particular was fortunate in sharing his holy company, love, and blessing. Wherever he went his enchanting figure left an unforgettable impression upon all, young and old, high and low. His tour reminded one of the triumphal procession of a hero. Men in crowds followed his trail wherever he stopped. People would flow in from morning till late at night to listen to a few inspiring words from his lips.

Many touching and remarkable incidents occurred during this itinerary. We have no space for them here. One which we are tempted to insert reveals his vision and greatness. In the course of his travels he found a village in Dacca filled with that scourge common in villages, namely, water-hyacinth. He asked the young men who accompanied him to remove the pest and himself proceeded to clear the pond. Inspired by his example the young men at once cleared the whole pond. Nor did they stop there. They organized a party and carried on this work of removing water-hyacinths in several villages of Vikrampur, which had been a standing nuisance for several years.

The long travel told on his health, and he returned to the Math with fever. The doctors diagnosed it to be the deadly Kala-azar. He was sent to Deoghar for a change. Suffering from the malady for about a year and a half as he was on the road to recovery he suddenly fell a victim to influenza. He was brought down to Calcutta to the house of Balaram Bose. The best medical help proved to be of no avail, and in the afternoon of Tuesday, the

30th of July, 1918, he left his mortal coils and entered Mahasamadhi in the presence of his brother disciples and monks of the Order.

The fell disease which held him in its deadly grip could not for a moment becloud the serenity of his faith. As in health, so also in illness, he would ever repeat, 'The grace of the Master is the only support;' and the name of Sri Ramakrishna was ever on his lips. It is not for ordinary mortals whose gaze is chained to the procession of phenomena to measure the heights of spirituality to which he attained. Only a jeweller can appraise a diamond. Sri Ramakrishna used to refer to him as a jewel-casket. But does that lift the veil of ignorance which obstructs our vision?

Like all men who have soared to the empyrean heights of spiritual realizations, he was reticent about his own experiences. But one stray incident may

be cited below to give a momentary glimpse into the light that burnt within.

One day after evening service Swami Premananda sat down for meditation in a corner of the southern verandah of the Shrine. The usual period of time flew by, but the Swami did not get up. The attendant of the Shrine, when he came to offer Bhoga (offering to the deity), found him sitting stock-still with his body tilted a little backward. He surmised that sleep had overtaken his exhausted flesh. He called him repeatedly, but in vain. He returned after the service, called him again—still there was no response. He then held a light before him. The Swami opened his eyes by and by. On being asked if he had fallen asleep, the Swami broke into a sweet song: 'I am awakened and will sleep no more. I am awake in the state of Yoga. O Mother, I have given back Thy mystic sleep to Thee and have put sleep to sleep.'

TO GOD

Ev'ry word I say,
Ev'ry deed I do,
Ev'ry thought I think,
Takes me a step nearer Thee—
Then will I make my life
A string of these small beads
To place at Thy noble feet.

Ev'ry day I live
Is a little bud
That opens a flower:
Should its sweet scent please Thee,
Then will I make my days
A wreath of flowers fine
To place at Thy Lotus feet.

—A. V. SURYANARAYANA.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

KUMBHA MELA AT ALLAHABAD

'Melas or religious fairs are quite akin to pilgrimages as regards their purpose and utility. They are highly useful from the standpoint of religion, of national solidarity and of economics. They constitute in short, parliaments of religion, shifting universities, and have been serving the purpose of national exhibitions of arts and crafts. The origin of Melas is veiled in obscurity, but their effect has been phenomenal and abiding.

'The most important of the Melas in India, the Kumbha Mela, has still preserved its glory as a great religious institution. It is mainly an institution of Sannyasins and wandering ascetics, and it is this large concourse of monks of diverse orders, that draws millions of religious-minded men from all parts of the country.

'The four important places of pilgrimage, viz. Hardwar, Allahabad, Ujjain and Nasik, where it is held at regular intervals, lend a special sanctity to the gathering. There is no definite organization behind it; still thousands of monks—some of whom have perhaps lived for years in solitude, far away from the haunts of people—assemble there. Naturally, the religious feelings of all India are deeply stirred on such occasions, and those who meet in the Mela have a splendid opportunity to discuss religious problems. By a flying visit to the places of pilgrimage, people may not always get a chance to meet persons with whom they can intimately talk on religious subjects, but in the Mela there is greater possibility of their finding men who are qualified to quench their religious thirst. The very memory

of such a vast gathering of religious persons serves as a stimulus to awaken in the minds of the pilgrims a deep religious consciousness, even though they may be engrossed in wordly pursuits. The Kumbha Mela is held every three years, probably to keep up the religious enthusiasm of the people and to present them from falling into a life of stagnation' (Swami Pavitrnananda in *The Cultural Heritage of India*).

This great religious event is to take place in the latter part of January near the sacred confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna in the city of Allahabad. The local branch of the Ramakrishna Mission (Muthiganj, Allahabad), under the leadership of Swami Raghavanandaji, is organizing medical relief for the pilgrims to the Mela. In our last month's issue, an appeal for funds was published in the 'News and Reports' section. We commend the cause as worthy of all support.

GUJARATHI RENAISSANCE

We read with pleasure in the *Indian Social Reformer* an editorial note on the above subject. We give it in full.

'One of the striking features of the last thirty years is the Gujarathi Renaissance. The inspiration of Gandhiji is its immediate cause. Though superficially Gandhiji's influence seemed to make for a barren simplicity, it really impressed the mind of India and of Gujarat more particularly with the importance of emancipating the spirit of man from the dominion of the world of things, as the first step towards the rousing of the creative spirit in him. The renaissance in Gujarat comprises a wide field. Literature, art, industry

and commerce are all within its range. The President of the Literary Conference held last week, a Parsi poet, Mr. Ardeshir Khabardar, seemed to imply that Commerce and Culture were somewhat mutually antagonistic. True commerce, as Ruskin defined it, the distribution of the world's goods according to needs of humanity at the proper time and place, is not only not antagonistic to culture, but is itself an important avenue of culture. In the past when Finance had not caught commerce in its "rude finger and thumb," commerce was always the carrier of culture from one country to another. Merchants were also philosophers because they were the people who had travelled in far off lands and studied the ways of thought and life of many nations. Nathan in Lessing's great play is a merchant prince with whom Saladin discussed weighty matters of state as well as religious and philosophical questions. The introduction of rapid mechanical means of travel has robbed commerce of its opportunities of observation and meditation. More than these, Finance has reduced Commerce to the position which it has come to occupy. But there is no danger of any Indian community succumbing utterly to this low kind of financial commerce as the framework of Indian life emphasizes at every point that Commerce and all other material activities are the second not the first:

A higher hand must make her mild,
If all be not in vain; and guide

Her footsteps, moving side by side

With wisdom, like the younger child. Literature, Art, even Religion are efflorescences of the spirit and have their origin in the spiritual life. Mr. Khabardar lamented the decay of the religious motive in modern writers. On the contrary, we feel that modern literature, emancipated from formal

religion, is permeated by the insight into the truth of Spirit as the sole Reality. One comes across this recognition in unexpected places and with startling suddenness. Anything in the nature of censorship, whether by Government or enforced by popular opinion, is intolerable to the creative spirit.'

We look forward to the day when the mercantile marine of India built by Indian hands will voyage the ocean highways carrying to far off lands the merchandise and culture of this great land.

THE COLOUR BAR

Crises and wars bring men closer together. One only wishes that the noble sentiments developed in times of strife may not be forgotten when conditions become settled. Christian countries have sinned deeply in the past by creating racial hatreds based upon differences in the pigmentation of the skin. We hear that efforts are being made to set aside such differences. The daily papers say that President Roosevelt has asked heads of all Government departments to take immediate steps to put into effect a policy of non-discrimination because of race, creed and national origin in Federal employment. We are told that the President's action followed protests that Negroes are being discriminated against in the defence programme. We also learn that a British journal gives prominence to the following: 'Let all who speak the English tongue mark the obsequies of the word "nigger." Too long current in vulgar speech and story-writers' oaths, an uncalled-for insult to the Negro race, it was coined out of contempt and has persisted only by the usage of the ill-natured and ignorant. It is unworthy of the language we cherish and, because it implies dis-

paragement, is wholly contrary to the spirit of mutual respect which is the essential basis of the community of British peoples. Now the term has been indicted in the House of Commons, the guardian of the rights and liberties not only of Britons but also of every race and people in the Dependencies of the Crown. There it has been condemned as offensive to the black and coloured, many of whom are fellow-citizens. Consequently, it is deserving of banishment from print and broadcast speech. Let it never more be heard among us; prevent our children learning it; leave it to perish in the purgatorial fires which shall consume all pretences of racial superiority.'

In the *Ceylon Daily News* Mr. G. K. W. Perera, former Trade Commissioner for Ceylon in the United Kingdom, recounting his experiences in attempting to find a suitable flat in London makes the following observations: 'After war broke out I had reason to hope that the attitude of the

English people would undergo a change; that this has not happened is clear from the incident connected with Sir Hari Singh Gour. The affront to this eminent person is bad enough, but that English people should make flimsy excuses for such indecency, even if they had any substance in them, is worse.' The 'guardians of the rights and liberties of every race and people in the Dependencies of the Crown' should take effective steps to remove the spirit that lies behind the word 'nigger'; merely leaving it 'to perish in the purgatorial fires which shall consume all pretences of racial superiority' will not do. The Concise Oxford Dictionary tells us that the word is used (loosely) for member of any dark-skinned race, e.g. East Indian, native Australian. The dictionary, of course, records the current usage. A change of heart is necessary to check the usage and thus bring about the true obsequies of the word. Thereafter, the dictionaries will give the word marking it as 'obsolete.'

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

WITTGENSTEINIAN PHILOSOPHY.
By PROF. G. N. MATHRANI, B.A. (Cantab).
Published by the author from Noushargate, Shikarpur, Sind. Pp. 147. Price Rupee One.

The views of Ludwig Wittgenstein and his followers are explained in this book. The sub-title *Studies in the New Cambridge-Philosophy* shows that the philosophers at Cambridge are interested in these views. In the foreword the author tells us that this school of thought was first started at Vienna University with Ludwig Wittgenstein as its head. Wittgenstein's mature ideas on philosophy, we are told, are to be found only in his 'Blue Book' and 'Brown Book' which remain unpublished. The author while at Cambridge worked for two years under the supervision of Mr. John Wisdom, a convert to the new philosophy.

In the book under review the author attempts to expound in a clear and simple style the fundamental tenets of Wittgensteinian philosophy. According to the new school philosophy is 'Critique of language' and great philosophical problems are not problems but language puzzles. Specifying the unspecified conventions of the usage of language is the function of philosophy, which, therefore, is not a theory, but activity. In tracing the criterion of meaning the author says that human speech may be divided into two kinds: (1) hard language, the language of the logician and the mathematician and (2) fluid language, the language of the common man, the scientist, the historian, the poet, the philosopher and the mystic. Fluid language may be sub-divided into (1) the descriptive, (2) the emotive and (3) the symbolic.

Wittgenstein is concerned with the descriptive part of the fluid language. According to Wittgenstein a statement can be false and yet meaningful, but it cannot be true and meaningless. The first essential is that the statement should be meaningful and its truth or falsity consists in the agreement or disagreement of its sense with reality. The author shows that the 'referent theory of meaning' of Richard and Ogden and the 'verification theory of meaning' of Mr. Ayer and others are different from the 'language-role theory of meaning' of Wittgenstein. Applying the criterion of meaning to metaphysics, Wittgensteinians claim to have found that metaphysical statements are meaningless. Wittgensteinians contend that all the 'traditional philosophical problems and their solutions arose out of an ignorance of the principles of symbolism and out of a misuse of language.' In the closing paragraphs of the book, the author tells us that the actual practice of the new philosophy seems to be both empty and blind and unless a constructive programme is worked out showing exactly where the philosophers of old were misled 'Wittgensteinian philosophy may see a quick death and remain only as one of the many historical schools of philosophy which exist no more.' Students of philosophy should be thankful to the author for stimulating interest in the views of a reputed thinker whose works remain unpublished.

A MISSIONARY AND HIS PLEDGE. By P. A. WADIA AND S. NATARAJAN. *Published by Mr. P. A. Wadia, Hormazd Villa, Cumballa Hill, Bombay. Pp. 43. Price Rupee One.*

The origin of the Kristagraha movement, its ideology, the manifestos which it issued regarding its attitude towards the world-crisis, the stand taken by Rev. Ralph T. Templin, the action of the ecclesiastical authorities ending with the expulsion of the Templins from the mission field and other relevant matters are dispassionately narrated in this book. In the 'foreword' the authors tell us that the story that they reproduce is 'the story of a sick church that sacrifices its life blood and deprives not only its members but the country (where it works to present Christ) of the services of those whom it regards as rebels, but who may be rebels in the likeness of their Master.' Within a brief compass the book contains much food for thought.

ASHRAMAS PAST AND PRESENT. By P. CHENCHIAH, V. CHAKKARAI AND A. N. SUDARISANAM. *Published by The Indian Christian Book Club, 8, Beracah Road, Kilpank, Madras. Pp. xv+326. Price Rs. 2.*

This is the first publication of The Indian Christian Book Club, the programme of which is appended to the book under review. The programme states that 'the Indian Christian stands in the unique position of inheriting the Christian as well as the Hindu and Mussulman cultures and by virtue of historical connections and accidents closely in touch with western cultures. Should he realize his own call and destiny, he should be able to bring to the interpretation of Christianity, the insights and disciplines that Hinduism and Islam impart to him and to transmit to them the energizing and redemptive influences of Christianity uncramped and untrammelled by tradition and custom. Equally so the burden is his to transmit such portions of western culture as are useful and helpful for national growth and freedom, to his people and to transmit the living energies of his inherited culture to the west.'

Christianity has not succeeded in winning converts from Islam and therefore the culture which 'the Indian Christian inherits' is Hindu culture. In the above programme Muslim culture is included 'by way of courtesy' and also in view of the fact that certain elements of the Semitic culture of Islam have permeated medieval and modern Hindu thought. Western culture reached this country mainly through the channel of modern education. Ministers of the Christian religion were among the pioneers of modern education and this historical accident connects Christianity with western culture. The educated Hindu freely draws upon the spiritual treasures of Christianity for he knows that Christ is an Oriental, an ascetic, a homeless wanderer who instructed his disciples saying 'Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way. And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall return to you again. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give.' The Hindu sees in this as well as in the lives of St. Antony and other hermits who lived in the deserts of Egypt, of St. Francis and other

homeless ascetics of Medieval Europe the detached life of the Sannyasin. What official Christianity inherited as the successor of the Roman Empire and the accretions added to it by various nations of the west may be valuable in themselves but they have no appeal to the Hindu mind.

We welcome the book as an earnest effort towards the realization of the aims for which the Christian Book Club stands. It exhibits a good deal of sound scholarship and contains some interesting matter. By extolling the Vanaprastha Ashrama and by deprecating Sannyasa and the Advaita philosophy it fails to present in the right perspective the supreme Hindu ideal which as far as we understand is also the supreme Christian ideal. Not only Christ but also Christian mystics have expressed their identity with the Supreme Reality and as we have shown above the homeless life is the personal example set by the Master to the disciples.

TAMIL

SOUTH INDIAN SCULPTURE. By K. NAVARETNAM, SECRETARY KALANILAYAM, JAFFNA, CEYLON. *Published by the author.* Pp. xv+160 Quarto size, with forty-one plates. Price de Luxe edition Rs. 12-8 As.

The book contains an introduction by Prof K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, Professor of Indian History and Archaeology, Madras University. It is divided into eight chapters and gives detailed and accurate information on the philosophy, history and technique of Dravidian sculpture. In the opening chapter the author traces the need for fostering the fine arts, and for developing true critical insight into the work of the old masters by a careful study of their technique. In the next chapter he gives a birds' eye view of the history of Indian sculpture and in the subsequent chapter of culture in Tamil-land. Accounts of the authoritative treatises on vogue among Tamil craftsmen, the principles of iconometry, the religious significance of the fine arts in India, Hindu icons and the image of Sri Nataraja are dealt with in the other chapters. The principles enunciated are illustrated by carefully executed full-page drawings and the half-tone plates showing some of the best specimens of Dravidian sculpture have been neatly made from excellent photographs. The printing of the plates by the Caxton press, Colombo,

and of the text by the Tiru-Makal press, Chunnakam, Jaffna, the clear exposition and lucid diction of the author, the selection and arrangement of the matter, all combine to make a very delightful book which is sure to find a permanent place in the literature of the fine arts in Tamil.

BENGALI

NARI PASHCHATYA SAMAJE O HINDU SAMAJE. (A STUDY OF HINDU SOCIAL ORGANIZATION). By SRI CHARUCHANDRA MITRA, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW AND VICE-PRESIDENT, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATION, BENGAL. *Published by the author from 53, Keshab Chandra Sen Street, Calcutta, Pp. 365+16. Price Rs. 3/-.*

This book is a collection of nineteen thoughtful essays making a comparative study of women's place in Western and Indian society. Some of these articles appeared in *Bharatvarsha* and *Basumati*, the popular Bengali monthlies of Calcutta and were then highly appreciated by the learned readers.

The author who likes to call this study a commentary on Hindu social organization contends that modern Hindu women should not blindly follow the suit of their sisters in the Western society and that the present agitation for the emancipation of Hindu women is an ignorant imitation of the West and is a movement in a wrong direction. Rightly he observes that Hindu society has always given a higher place to women than any Western society of the modern age. The respect, he reiterates, that is paid to women in Hindu society almost amounts to worship and is nowhere paralleled. Hindu law givers have unanimously given injunctions for the actual adoration of women in our homes. Hence the future of Hindu women should be thought of as a continuation and fulfilment of the past. To socialize them at the instance of the West and to educate them for money-making professions and public life is simply to stunt the growth of their life's normal evolution. They may fare well for the time being in the public life, but they are not constitutionally fit for it. Quoting quite a good number of standard authors and works on the subject, the learned author exposes the sufferings and limitations of modern Western women and convincingly shows that they are in no way better off than their Hindu sisters.

The thoughtful author pleads for a reconsideration and reorientation of the ideas and activities of the feminist movement in

Hindu society in the light of our past achievements as well as the present failures and the glaring defects of Western society.

The author however evinces his orthodoxy when he finds fault with the Sarda Act, and advocates child-marriage as one of the best means of 'reducing social evils in Hindu society.

This book is really a thought-provoking study and discusses very seriously the modern problems of Hindu women from various angles, throwing some new light on many intricate points.

The book, therefore, deserves a perusal from all interested in the subject.

CHHANDASIKI. (AN ACCOUNT OF BENGALI PROSODY). BY SRI DILIP KUMAR ROY. *Published by the Culture Publishers, 25 A, Bokulbagan Row, Bhowanipore, Calcutta.* Pp. 259+34. Price Rs. 2-8 As.

Dilip Kumar, D. L. Roy's worthy son and successor, is well known as a Bengali author whose works are considerably popular for novelty of style, richness of contents as well as variety of subjects. He needs no introduction to the Bengali reading public as a distinguished *littérateur* and connoisseur of music. But in the book under review another facet of his many-sided genius is revealed; for, here he appears as a prosodist of rare distinction.

In the present work the art of Bengali verse (Chhanda), its origin, analysis, and history are very carefully dealt with in eleven chapters, besides the Appendix which makes a comparative study of the artifice of versification in English, Sanskrit and Bengali. The work is evidently the result of vast study and deep thinking.

The author first traces the development of Bengali Chhanda (Bengali and Sanskrit name for the art of verse) and describes quite a good number of Bengali Chhanda with apt illustrations for each from the great Bengali poets of the past and present such as Govindadas, Madhusudan, Satyendra-nath, Dvijendra Lall, Ramprasad, Kamalakanta, Krittivas, Vidyapati, Kashiram, Chandidas, Bharatchandra, Kazi Nazrul, abindranath and many others. The author who is also a master of several European languages rightly observes that as the art of poetry was considered by the ancient Greeks as a branch of music and as such was co-ordinated with harmony and orchestral effect, so in Bengali also rhythm is the

verbal expression of the divine. In order to support his view he quotes his Guru Sri Aurobindo who defines Chhanda as supreme rhythmic language, which seizes hold upon all that is finite and brings into each the light and voice of its own infinite. The author further holds with Sri Aurobindo that metre, rhyme, etc. are never regarded in Bengali as artificial but natural.

The author predicts a bright and glorious future for Bengali verse and points out with true insight to the growing and rising generation of Bengali poets the innumerable variety, incomparable richness and infinite possibilities of Bengali verse which few modern languages can equal, much less surpass.

He therefore invites the readers and creators of Bengali poetry to an intimate acquaintance of the natural laws by which all versification is conditioned.

This book may safely be recommended as a Text Book in the college classes of the Calcutta and Dacca Universities where Bengali is taught up to the M.A. classes. It may very well serve the purpose of a guide-book for all students of Bengali prosody.

MAHATMA GANDHI O SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. BY KALINGA NATH GHOSE, M.A. The Planter's Press Limited, Jalpaiguri. Pp. 32. Price 2 As.

This book is a comparative study of the life of Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda. Within a short compass the author has tried to show the underlying unity of these two lives, as in non-attachment, courage, sincerity, truthfulness, and love of Motherland and also their agreement in their method of approach to the problem of untouchability, the spread of education and the communal problem. When it is a question of comparison of the two lives it would be more correct to say that Gandhi is like Vivekananda than to say that Vivekananda is like Gandhi, for of the two Vivekananda preceded in time. The writer paints Vivekananda as more Rajasik than Sattvik and as influenced more by the organizing efficiency of the Buddhistic epoch than by the great heart of the Buddha. The Swami's heart-felt love and sympathy for the poor and downtrodden masses and his spirit of service are manifest proofs of another side to his personality. The book comes from the pen of an earnest young man and therefore deserves consideration.

NEWS AND REPORTS/

SWAMI MADHAVANANDAJI'S TOUR

Srimat Swami Madhavananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, has successfully completed a five weeks' tour up to Assam. He left Belur on the 10th October for Vizagapatam, where on the 12th October he delivered a public lecture at the Town Hall on "Religion in Everyday Life." The next day the Swami performed the opening ceremony of the building of the Mission Students' Home, the gift of Mr. K. Ramabrahmam, a well-known merchant of the town. Returning to Belur on the 15th, he left on the following day for Kalimpong, whence he visited Jalpaiguri on the 19th October. The next day, among other things, he gave a talk to the ladies at the Mission premises, and the day after, he was accorded a public reception. On the 22nd he left for Dinajpur, where the next day he presided over a condolence meeting in the Ashrama in memory of the late lamented Jogindra Chandra Chakravarty, the leading public man of the District and a great friend of the Ashrama, and also addressed a public meeting, at which Pandit Ram Narayan Tarkatirtha presided. The next evening he gave a public religious lecture in the local High School premises, after which he left for Shillong.

At Pandu he was cordially received by the gentry of Gauhati, from where he motored to Shillong. The same evening a public reception was given to him at the Quinton Hall, presided over by the Hon'ble Mr. B. K. Das, Speaker, Legislative Assembly, Assam, after which he spoke at a public meeting at Laban held for the promotion of communal harmony. On the 26th he gave a talk to the Karmi-Sangha of the Mission in the morning, and delivered a public lecture on "Religion and its Practice" at the Opera Hall, presided over by Mr. M. A. T. Iyengar, I.C.S. On the 27th he gave another lecture on "Vedanta and Human Problems" at the same place, in which Mr. S. P. Desai, I.C.S., presided. On the 28th the Swami presided, at the Quinton Hall, over the Prize Distribution ceremony of the Mission School at Mowkhar. The next day he visited the Ramakrishna Mission High School at Cherrapunji, where he was given an address

by the public as well as one by the student and in the course of his reply he spoke "The Way to Happiness." Returning Shillong on the 30th, he gave a public lecture at the Sen Khasi Hall on "The Message of India", Mr. A. Khong Pai presiding. On the 31st he left by car for Sylhet, reaching the Mission centre in the evening.

On the 1st November, the Swami was given a public reception in the premises of the Raja Girish Chandra H. E. School presided over by Rai Bahadur Satis Chandra Dutt. On the next day he addressed in the morning the members of the School Institute, who are teachers, on "The Place of Religion in Education" at the Government High School, and in the evening he delivered a lecture at the first-named place on "Religion and World Problems," Principal Harshanath Sen of the Murarichand College, presiding. On the 3rd he went in the morning to a village called Dalaipara, 6 miles from the town, to preside at the Prize Distribution of the Mission's primary school in the District and on the way visited an outdoor Dispensary run by the Mission. The evening he gave another public lecture in the above High School premises "Vedanta in Practice," presided over by Pandit Akhil Chandra Tarkatirtha, Principal, Sanskrit College, Sylhet. On the 4th the Swami addressed the students of the M. C. College in the afternoon, and held a conversation class at the Ashrama in the evening.

The next evening he reached Habiganj. On the 6th November he was given a public reception at the Town Hall, and received three other addresses. He also visited the Mission School for cobbler children at Gosainagar, in the outskirts of the town. The next day he lectured to the students of the local College. On the 7th he left for Karimganj. On the 8th November he was given a public reception at the Ashrama in the evening, presided over by Mr. Jarnal, the S.D.O., after which the Swami gave a talk to the ladies. The next morning he held a conversation class for the students and in the evening lectured on "The Modern World and Religion." On the 11th he

reached Silchar in the morning, and addressed a public meeting in the evening at the Ashrama premises, in which Mr. S. K. Haldar, I.C.S., District Judge, presided. The next morning the Swami laid the foundation of the Sri Ramakrishna temple at the Ashrama, addressed the students of the local High Schools in the afternoon, and in the evening gave another public lecture at the Ashrama, Mr. Haldar presiding. On the 18th he delivered a lecture to the students of the local college and held a conversation for the ladies. The next morning he left for Halfong, on the Hill Section of the A. B. Railway, where in the evening he was given a public reception at a Jagannath temple. On the 15th he

reached Gauhati where in the next morning he spoke on the ideals and activities of the Ramakrishna Mission to the students of the local College. After a visit to the local Ramakrishna Seva Samiti in the afternoon, he addressed a public meeting at the Harisabha on "Contributions of Sri Ramakrishna in the Field of Religion". He then left for the Belur Math, which he reached on the 17th November. Throughout the tour the Swami was accorded a uniformly hearty welcome, and he had the pleasure of coming in contact with respectable citizens as well as devotees and close friends of the Ashramas. The meetings, too, were mostly very well attended and evoked great enthusiasm.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION CALCUTTA STUDENTS' HOME, 'RE-UNION AND SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATION'

The Re-union of the past and present students and the Silver Jubilee Celebration of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home began on the 21st October and lasted for three days.

Early in the morning on the 21st October the auspicious opening ceremony of the function was begun with a Homa. This was followed by the special Conference of the Re-union. Swami Nirvedananda was unanimously elected as the general President. After the address of the Chairman of the Reception Committee and the report of the Secretary and some speeches by the members present, the President presented the special number of the *Vidyarthi*, the manuscript magazine of the Home, and delivered his address showing clearly how the Students' Home is run on the lines suggested by Swami Vivekananda and how the training of the Home prepares the students for the many baffling problems of the present society. There was another session of the Conference in the afternoon. The day's business came to a close with a magical performance.

The second day was set apart for public celebration. The day began with special worship of Sri Guru Maharaj. Monks from the Belur Math and other centres came to join the day's function. At the request of the Ex-students' Standing Committee Swami Nirvedananda laid the foundation of the gymnasium which the ex-students proposed to erect in commemoration of the Silver Jubilee of the Home. At 4 p.m. a public meeting was held in the Students' Home compound, under the presidency of Sir Manmathanath Mukherjee. The subject for discussion was 'Swami Vivekananda on the Ideas and Ideals of Education.' Many eminent persons spoke on the occasion. The President placed before the meeting the Souvenir of the Students' Home. In the night the Barbela Sahitya Baithak staged their famous drama 'Bhishma.'

On the third day the Conference began at 4 p.m. and came to a close at 10 p.m. There were intervals for the Aratrika and the comic sketches of Hasyanidhi Manoranjan Sarkar.

✓ THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE REPORT FOR 1938—1940

The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture was established at Calcutta on January 29, 1938 in fulfilment of one of the projects of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Committee.

Objects : The Institute has for its objects the promotion and propagation of Indian culture in all its branches by intensive

studies and researches. It also aims at assimilating the essential principles of the different cultures of the world by cultivating acquaintance with the creative achievements and spiritual experiences of the diverse races, castes, classes and communities of mankind on a scientific, comparative and cosmopolitan basis.

Classes, Study Circles : Indian History and Culture, Patanjali's Yoga Philosophy, Comparative Study of Bradley and Shankara, Vedantasara, Vedanta Paribhasha, Viveka-Chudamani and Mandukyopanishad, the Upanishads, Sankhya Karika and Works of Swami Vivekananda were the subjects taken up for study and discussion. Professors of the Calcutta University and Colleges and monks of the Mission conducted classes and led discussions.

Lectures : 92 lectures were delivered by distinguished scholars of India and abroad. The average attendance was 146.

Library and Reading Room : The Library besides giving scope to the public for acquiring knowledge has also provided sufficient useful material for carrying out researches into various subjects. The recent enrichment by the gift of the late Dr. Barid Baran Mukherjee's collection has become a valuable asset to the Institute.

Students' Home : During 1939-40 the Students' Home accommodated 12 college students of whom 8 passed the M.A. and M.Sc. examinations (one in 1st class). The students greatly profited by the intellectual atmosphere of the Institute.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, ALLAHABAD

The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Muthigung, was started in 1910. Since then it has been carrying on its work with unabated zeal and energy. Its scope of work has been steadily increasing. The work is being done in a purely non-sectarian spirit and the Mission is serving the diseased poor without distinction of caste or colour.

From 1937 to 1940, 1,11,607 sick poor were treated in the Outdoor Dispensary, of which 19,943 were new cases and 91,664 repeated ones. In 1937, the number was 27,224, in 1938, 26,576, in 1939, 28,865 and in 1940, 29,442.

Besides rendering medical service the Mission has opened a Library of valuable books on different subjects and a Free Reading Room with 24 magazines and 4 daily papers. The Library has fulfilled a great need of the locality. The average daily attendance of the Free Reading Room

Cultural Relations : Contact was established through correspondence with interested individuals and institutions in different parts of India as well as England, France, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Italy, U.S.A., South America, etc.

Publications : The Institute has already published six books in nine volumes. Some of these as *The Cultural Heritage of India*, *Sri Ramakrishna and Spiritual Renaissance*, *The Religions of the World* etc. are of priceless value to East and West alike.

Musical Demonstration : Demonstration of Indian Music, both vocal and instrumental, were given by some distinguished artists on several occasions.

Till now the Institute has been running only six departments but it has possibilities of further and greater prospects which need considerable funds. It is obvious that the entire scheme of the Institute can be worked out effectively when it is housed properly in a permanent edifice of its own. Such a house will cost more than Rs. 2,00,000. The authorities appeal to the generous leaders of cultural life to help towards the realization of this scheme by their friendly co-operation and financial and other contributions.

was 88. A Night School has been recently started for the benefit of the poor in the locality. There were 12 boys on the roll with an average attendance of 8.

Religious classes in Hindi were organized in the Math on Sundays. There were indoor religious classes in 1940 with an attendance varying from 20 to 10. Religious classes were also held in the University Hindu Boarding and K. P. University College Hostel. It was of great benefit to the students. There were 24 such classes in 1940. The Swami in charge was invited on several occasions from different places to speak on the life and teachings of the Master.

Public celebrations of the anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were held in 1939 and 1940. Many well-known speakers, including Pandit Amarnath Jha, Vice-Chancellor, spoke on the life and teachings of the Masters.





